



Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Approved by: Penny Harris (Director) Jane Cox (Director) **Date:** 8th September 2026

Last reviewed on: 1st September 2025

Next review due by: 1st September 2027

All policies are generated and reviewed with an awareness of equality and diversity in relation to pupils, staff and visitors. All policies are generated and reviewed placing safeguarding and wellbeing at the heart of all that we do.

1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (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 sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Notice non-verbal communication; 'I wish my teacher knew'
- Create a safe place for all students to feel comfortable in

2. Statutory requirements

This policy meets the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in line with the required statutory expectations and in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – the directors pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance

- Staff consultation – school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Pupil voice – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE.

4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set within our PSHE curriculum but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary to be age and stage appropriate and meet the needs of our pupils with a diverse range of special educational needs.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

There may be particular focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings.
- How a baby is conceived and born?

6. Delivery of RSE

High quality, evidence-based and age appropriate teaching of RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum.

Biological aspects of RSE are also taught within the science curriculum. RSE teaching is sensitive, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law. Where possible, pupils may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

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

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will deliver the curriculum content with contextual mindfulness and sensitivity. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in

advance, and share any relevant materials on request. We will offer support to parents and pupils if and when conversations arise following curriculum delivery.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Physical health and mental wellbeing is embedded within the school ethos. Topics taught include Mental wellbeing, Internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, Healthy eating, Health and prevention, Drugs, alcohol and tobacco, Basic First aid and the changing adolescent body are taught within specific subject areas and within the school whole school activities programme.

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The directors

The directors will approve the RSE policy, and hold the school leader to account for its implementation.

7.2 The school leader

The school leader is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

7.3 Staff

Staff – predominantly the PSHE teacher are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils – lessons are adapted and tailored
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE
- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes – wonder, imagine, notice, empathise
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the head teacher.

7.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the School Leaders. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The School leader will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a pupil's specific vulnerability, the head teacher can refuse a request to withdraw the pupil from sex education.

9. Training

Relevant staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. The school will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the directors (Jane Cox and Penny Harris) through half termly visits to the school and including work scrutinies, learning walks and conversations with staff and pupils. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the directors annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the school leader.

Appendix 1: RSE Curriculum

Appendix 3: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	That there are different types of committed, stable relationships How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, and that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have entered into a non-legally binding religious ceremony That ‘common-law marriage’ is a myth, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together That forced marriage and marriage before the age of 18 are illegal How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the early years of a child’s life for brain development. How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are in a relationship or when they are unsure who to trust
Respectful relationships, including friendships	About the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships and friendships. Pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outcomes, communication, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and entitled to respect The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these relate to positive relationships with others. This includes developing one’s own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand that everyone means to be treated with respect by others What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people’s beliefs The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes how to interact respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders, and where to get help Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings may bring, such as hurt or frustration The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical consent involves kindness, care and attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says ‘yes’ to doing something that doesn’t automatically make it ethical How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation, and disability, can cause harm and damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be able to identify and challenge other forms of prejudice How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how those who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy a position of power or without realising it, impose their preferences on others How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual practices, disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing a false sense of entitlement to the bodies of others How some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by incel communities (incels) or online influencers
Online safety and awareness	Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply online as in real life

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	About online risks, including that any material they provide provides to another has the potential to be shared and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. They should also understand the difficulties of online spaces and related safety issues Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal information. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened, it is difficult to know where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law About the characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and/or may be created with AI. They should also know that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they would in person and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime (even if the photo is of themselves, even if they consented, and even if the photo was created by that child and/or using AI). That there are potentially serious risks associated with generating these images. That sharing indecent images of people over 18 without their consent is also a crime How to seek support. They should also understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either if they or someone of themselves has been shared What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including how to report it and how to manage issues online About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as the risks that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content, violence or use of weapons Where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that the internet is a picture of the world and normalise or glamourise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive control and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviour and how people behave towards sexual partners. That this can affect people who see pornographic content accidentally or deliberately. That pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively affect people How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for example to enable targeted advertising That criminals can operate online scams, such as using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable information. That this can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams and seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating false information That it is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how to use them safely
Being safe	How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and caring are important for consent That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from others, including peer pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge whether someone is trustworthy (recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community and ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. That there are strategies they can use to stay safe

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further asexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			

Parent signature	

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	