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# **Relationships and Sex Education policy**

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**Reviewed: September 2023**

**Next Review: September 2024**

## **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

**Name of RSE Lead: Jo Glover (DHT/ Senco/DSL) Assistant Lead: Kerrie Chandler (Child Welfare Officer, Play Therapist/DSL)**

**Name of RSE Governor: Caroline Brookes**

### **1. Introduction**

This policy outlines our school's commitment to provide effective Relationships, Sex and Health Education for all pupils in support of that offered by parents, who are the first educators of their children in this area. It sits in close conjunction with our school's PSHE policy. It has been written with regard to the DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance 2019 and other relevant guidance documents and statutory requirements.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 make Relationships and Health Education compulsory for children receiving primary education. To meet the needs of our pupils we will also deliver sex education, see section 8 for more details.

The RSE teaching in this school contributes to our statutory duty to safeguard children and prepare them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. RSE is taught in an age-appropriate manner throughout the school.

### **2. Formulation, dissemination, monitoring and review of policy**

The RSE policy has been developed following consultation with the whole school community.

Consultation took place in the following ways:

- Discussions at staff meetings and during staff training sessions
- Pupil council discussion
- Parent briefings- at Spring parents evening, via Parent Mail and invitation to a parent coffee morning with the LA RSE advisor
- Governor involvement

In developing our policy and curriculum we have given due regard to the government's statutory guidance for RSE issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

The RSE policy is available on the school website and free of charge to interested parties via reception. A quick read version with key points is also available.

The RSE policy and curriculum will be reviewed annually by the RSE Leaders, Headteacher and governors. This review will be informed by the following: pupil and staff evaluation of the programme; teacher assessment; changes in legislation and guidance; and, parent feedback gathered through an annual survey.

### **3. What is RSE?**

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. Through RSE children learn about relationships, diversity, respect, healthy lifestyles, safety, the body and how it changes, reproduction and birth in a sensitive and age-appropriate way. In primary school we are building the foundations of skills and knowledge that will be developed further at secondary level.

Our key aim in providing RSE throughout the school is to safeguard our pupils. During their time at this school children will learn key knowledge and skills to help keep them safe and prepare them for adult life.

### **4. Why RSE is important in our school**

RSE is fundamental to our school approach of being Ready, Respectful and Safe and our core values Respect, Kindness and Empathy, Aspiration, Curiosity, Collaboration and Perseverance.

We acknowledge that not all parents feel confident or comfortable talking to their children about this area therefore our work in school ensures that all pupils have the information they need to keep safe and make positive, healthy choices.

It is our intent for the RSE element of our school curriculum to engage, inspire, challenge and encourage pupils, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to be out in the wider world and community.

We teach children important life skills – how to keep themselves safe and healthy (including digital literacy); all about positive relationships; and how they can grow as British citizens to uphold principles of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect, and tolerance of those of different faiths and beliefs. We also teach important character building skills – aspiration, creativity, leadership, listening, presenting, problem-solving, resilience and teamwork .

### **5. Key Objectives**

The key objectives of our RSE programme are to:

- Develop knowledge and understanding of positive and healthy relationships and the importance of commitment
- Make pupils aware of their rights especially in relation to their bodies
- Enable the development of social and relationship skills and protective behaviours
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of puberty
- Develop understanding of reproduction and birth within the context of loving and caring relationships
- Explore a range of attitudes, values and faith perspectives around aspects of relationships
- Support pupils to use the internet safely and to recognise the benefits and risks that it brings
- Develop pupils' skills around assessing risk and keeping safe
- Enable children to gain the skills and understanding to support the development of healthy bodies and minds
- Enable pupils to recognise and manage their emotions
- Provide pupils with the knowledge and skills to access appropriate support

The RSE programme is based on the needs of pupils in the school with learning outcomes appropriate to their age, ability and level of maturity. RSE will be firmly embedded within our broader curriculum areas, including Science, PSHE and PE, in addition to more focused learning through RSE sessions, assemblies and Focus Days and or theme Weeks. Pupils will be helped to appreciate difference and to respect themselves and others.

## **6. Equality, Inclusion and Support**

We are required to comply with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Our school values diversity, encourages respect for all and promotes tolerance for, and celebration of, difference. We do not discriminate against pupils because of any protected characteristic (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation). At times, when there is an identified need, we may take positive action through our planning and delivery of RSE to deal with disadvantages facing those with a particular characteristic.

RSE will be accessible to all regardless of their gender. Through the delivery of RSE teachers will explore gender stereotypes and how they may limit a person's potential and ensure that people of all genders receive information that is relevant to their needs.

There are many different faith and cultural perspectives on aspects of RSE. As a school we will deliver RSE in a factual, non-judgmental way ensuring that teachers do not promote one faith or cultural viewpoint but rather provide a balanced approach that acknowledges the wealth of views and opinions of our community and teaches tolerance

Parents and carers are key partners in RSE and are best placed to support their children to understand how their learning at school fits with their family's faith, beliefs and values. To support this process, we will ensure that parents are made aware of what will be taught and when.

We will use a range of materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our school population and encourage acceptance and tolerance. We want every child and family to feel included, respected and valued.

Teachers will plan in different ways and use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals. For some children, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, a differentiated approach may be necessary to ensure learning outcomes are met – this will be discussed with parents/carers and an individual support plan developed. Some pupils may have experienced adverse childhood experiences that may impact on their ability to engage with RSE in a variety of ways. Care will be taken to ensure that, where this is the case parents/carers are consulted about the most appropriate way for the pupil to access the curriculum.

A range of different families and relationships will be explored within RSE. All children whatever their identity, developing identity, or family background need to feel that RSE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. This means that resources and books used will show families of all kinds, including mum/dad, two mums, two dads, fostering, adoption, single parent, extended family and others. This reflects both our school community and wider society.

## **7. The Curriculum**

RSE will be taught in each year group throughout the school. The curriculum we deliver is age-appropriate and progressive, building the children's knowledge, understanding and skills year on year. We work to objectives in each year group that support the outcomes outlined in the government RSE guidance.

Some elements of RSE are delivered through national curriculum Science:

### **Year 2**

*Pupils should be taught to:*

- notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- describe the importance for humans of hygiene.

## **Year 5**

*Pupils should be taught to:*

- describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

Below is a list of themes covered by our RSE programme:

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

We deliver our RSE as part of our PSHE work, in science, through theme work and assemblies.

We also participate in the national annual RSE day at school in June to further promote and celebrate excellent RSE, that promotes the wellbeing of, and safeguards, children and young people.

## **8. Resources**

As with any other subject, the breadth of the RSE curriculum necessitates the use of a wide variety of age-appropriate activities, books and resources. Teachers select resources that support the learning outcomes for the year group they are teaching.

School have a membership to the PSHE Association website and all teachers have a log in to access resources.

We hold a parent meeting at the start of each year where you can familiarize yourself with the resources to be used. If you would like to see these at other times of the year please speak to your child's teacher. Your child's class teacher will inform you of the RSE to be taught in each term via the class newsletter sent out on ParentMail.

If you would like to discuss any of the resources in more detail please contact Jo Glover or Kerrie Chandler.

## **9. Sex Education**

In addition to Relationships and Health Education we also cover sex education in Years 5 and 6. The content of sex education includes learning about reproduction, pregnancy and birth as well as consent. Parents are able to withdraw their child from this learning if they choose to, see 'Parents' section 15 below.

## **10. Teaching and Learning**

All teachers have responsibility for planning and delivering RSE. Teaching Assistants will support with the delivery of the content planned by the teacher. Everyone involved in the teaching of RSE will follow the school policy.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE. A balanced and non-judgmental approach will be taken. Teachers, and all those contributing to RSE will work to the agreed values within this policy.

Within RSE pupils will develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships, keeping safe, health, puberty and sex. To achieve this a number of teaching strategies will be used, including:

- Establishing ground rules with pupils;
- Using 'distancing' techniques (e.g. case studies)
- The provision of a 'question box' during some planned sessions.
- Dealing with children's questions in an appropriate manner
- Using discussion and appropriate materials; and role play
- Encouraging reflection.

RSE will be delivered all year round – parents/carers will be informed of what will be covered when at the beginning of the year.

### **11. External speakers**

Occasionally we use external speakers to enhance our delivery of RSE. All external speakers deliver in line with our RSE policy and safeguarding procedures. NSPCC deliver our Speak Out, Stay Safe program.

### **12. Safe learning in RSE**

It is important that all pupils feel safe and able to participate in RSE lessons. To support the involvement of all pupils, teachers will create a group agreement with each class outlining expectations around rights, responsibilities and respect. The group agreement will be a working document that all pupils agree to follow.

The group agreement will outline rules regarding questions. As with any theme pupils will ask questions during RSE to further their understanding. Due to the sensitive nature of the topic teachers will employ strategies to ensure that questions are asked and answered in a factual, balanced and age-appropriate way. The group agreement will remind pupils that personal questions are not appropriate.

When pupils can write independently, they will be introduced to the 'question box', into which they can place their written questions. This allows the teacher the opportunity to group questions into themes and filter any that may need answering on an individual basis or, in some cases, referred to parents. All staff will be mindful of their safeguarding role and will follow the relevant school procedures if a question raises concerns of this nature.

Teachers will use the following strategies to deal with unexpected questions:

- If a question is personal, the teacher will remind pupils of the rules set in the group agreement
- If the teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, the teacher will acknowledge this and will research the question and provide an appropriate answer later.
- If the question is too explicit, is outside set parameters, is inappropriate in a whole class setting or raises concerns about sexual abuse the teacher will attend to it on an individual basis.

Sometimes pupils may ask questions about issues that are not part of the planned programme, this could show that the taught curriculum is not meeting their needs. This will be fed back to the RSE lead as part of the evaluation and monitoring process.

### **13. Staff Training**

All staff delivering RSE will take part in an initial training session facilitated by the RSE leads. If a staff member has additional learning and development needs these will be supported either through mentoring from a more experienced staff member in school, team-teaching, observations or attendance at an internal or external training event.

### **14. Assessment and Review**

Teachers use a range of assessment strategies to track pupils' progress towards the learning outcomes in RSE. This may include children's work in books, self-assessment and peer assessment, pre and post theme teacher assessment through a question approach, quizzes, presentations. Governors will monitor the achievement of pupils in RSE and pupils' progress in RSE will be included in the end of year report.

### **15. Parents**

We believe that RSE is a partnership between school and parents/carers. We recognise that parents are the first teachers of their children and welcome their engagement with our RSE curriculum. It is important that RSE delivered in school is explored in more detail within the context of individual families. Parents will be routinely informed about RSE through ParentMail, the school website and letters to explain when RSE will take place in different year groups and what will be covered.

We will regularly consult with parents on an annual basis about any needs they may have in relation to our RSE policy and curriculum.

Any parents wanting more information about our RSE curriculum can contact Jo Glover

### **16. Right to withdraw from sex education:**

Whilst we always try to work with parents to explore their views, we also accept that parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child from the sex education elements of our programme (other than that which comes within the Science curriculum). There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Parents can exercise their right to withdraw their child from sex education in Years 5 and 6 by sending a letter or email to the Headteacher. Teachers will plan appropriate, purposeful education for children who are withdrawn from sex education.

### **17. Confidentiality, safeguarding and child protection**

Everyone involved in RSE will be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. Teachers will discuss confidentiality with pupils through the development of a group agreement at the start of lessons, making it clear that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Pupils will be informed that if confidentiality has to be broken, due to safeguarding concerns, they will be informed first and then supported as appropriate.

Teachers will be aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable, can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. Everyone involved in RSE will be alert to signs of abuse and report concerns or suspicions to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as outlined in the safeguarding policy. Any disclosure of sexual activity from a primary age child would raise immediate child protection concerns that would be dealt with in a sensitive manner in line with local safeguarding procedures.

## **18. Menstrual wellbeing**

Some pupils will begin menstruation in primary school. To support pupils who are menstruating we have in place the following:

- Sanitary disposal units are available for pupils in the toilet by hall and the staff toilet in the New Block
- Pupils can access sanitary products from the cabin or from Miss Rodgers in the New Block.
- For those experiencing period poverty free sanitary protection can be accessed from Jodie Burton.
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When a pupil starts menstruating in school we will support them on-site and inform parents. Our RSE programme covers basic information about menstruation in year 5 with more detailed input in year 6. If your child has difficulties managing their periods at school please contact Jodie Burton, our school's Family Support Worker who will be happy to help.

## **19. Links to other Policies**

- *Anti-bullying*
- *Religious Education*
- *Science*
- *Safeguarding*
- *Equality*
- *Health and Safety*
- *PSHE*

## **20. More information**

If you would like to discuss our provision of RSE further please contact Jo Glover [senco@walterhalls.nottingham.sch.uk](mailto:senco@walterhalls.nottingham.sch.uk)

*If you have a complaint about any aspect of our RSE provision please address this to the chair of governors.*

*James Sullivan  
Chair of Governors  
Walter Halls Primary School*