

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY**

**Hevingham and Marsham Primary school partnership and  
Hevingham Under 5's  
February 2023**

### **Basic information**

This policy covers our school's approach to teaching RSE in all year groups.

It was produced by the RSE Lead

It was informed by consultation with parents and carers, children and governors.

It will be reviewed in February 2026

### **How will the policy be made available to parents?**

Parents will be informed about the policy through the school newsletter. Parents will also be signposted to this policy after meeting teachers, where the content of the policy may be relevant to the meeting.

The policy will be available to parents through the school website, under the policies heading.

### **Our schools' aims**

Ideally, all our children will leave our schools with the skills necessary to lead an emotionally, socially and physically healthy life. They will understand how bodies change and how they differ, as well as understanding factors which can change how they develop physically, emotionally and socially. Our children will leave knowing which choices they make in life can affect their health, and that lifestyle is an important factor in their wellbeing.

Ideally, our children will leave school being able to create and maintain healthy, mutually respectful relationships, and to recognise which behaviours and choices can influence this.

Ideally, our children will leave with a wide reaching respect for diversity and those who are diverse, whether it be race, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, neuro-diversity, age or economic status.

## Rationale

The Sex Education Forum define RSE as:

*Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.*

We define 'relationships and sex education' as a progressive curricular approach to teaching children how to be healthy in terms of their emotional, physical and social wellbeing, as well as understanding how their bodies will change as they transition into adolescence and further.

We consider that it includes:

| Emotional wellbeing   | Social wellbeing   | Physical wellbeing   |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● understanding yourself</li><li>● confidence in being an individual</li><li>● calming down</li><li>● solving problems</li><li>● feeling pride</li><li>● making good choices</li><li>● identifying comfortable and uncomfortable emotions</li><li>● empathy</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● valuing diversity</li><li>● working in varied groups</li><li>● speaking politely and respectfully</li><li>● solving friendship problems</li><li>● including others in activities</li><li>● maintaining relationships when problems arise</li><li>● anti bullying</li><li>● staying safe online</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● healthy eating</li><li>● smoking education</li><li>● drugs education</li><li>● puberty and how bodies change</li><li>● PE teaching</li></ul> |

We believe it is important to address this area of the basic curriculum because the above factors all combine to create positive, empathetic and supportive members of society who can form and develop healthy relationships. Many children find the transition to secondary school very difficult without progressive and full RSE teaching, with many having great difficulty managing relationships and their own mental health.

We are required to teach Relationships Education in Primary school, and we choose to teach Sex Education at an age appropriate level to our children too. The Sex Education comprises the elements from our statutory science curriculum (how humans are conceived and born) as well as preparing children for changes both in male and female bodies.

We believe it is vital to address Relationship and Sex Education in this age group because it forms the structure of mutual respect, safe and fulfilling relationships, positive decision making and tolerant viewpoints.

### **Values –**

Our programme promotes the values of Kindness, Respect, Perseverance and Motivation; These are our core values linked to our Behaviour for Learning Policy. Throughout our teaching of RSE, we will embed these core values within each lesson, so our children learn the link between their health, relationships and wellbeing and positive mutually beneficial behaviour throughout their lives.

Our programme also promotes the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect for and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs and for those without faith. Again, our teaching and programme embed these values throughout, to ensure our children have an understanding of citizen's rights and responsibilities, regardless of what others believe. These core values are communicated clearly during our RSE lessons, but also throughout our daily practice in school.

- Respect for oneself and other people.
- Taking responsibility for one's actions in all situations.
- Honesty and loyalty in relationships.
- The importance and responsibilities of the family unit for all members.
- Sensitivity towards the needs and views of others.
- To recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour.
- To recognise and accept the difference of others.

As well as these core values for RSE, we have specific values for RSE lessons which help to ensure children and adults are protected and respected during these times. These values can be part of a working agreement with the children and teachers before some RSE lessons. As teachers, our own values and attitudes are important to be aware of, and should mirror those of the curriculum policy. The values and attitudes applicable to pupils and staff in our schools comprise:

- Openness
- Keeping the conversation in the room when necessary
- Having a non-judgemental approach
- Allowing a right to pass
- Making no assumptions
- Listening to others
- Using appropriate and accurate language
- Asking questions when we need to
- Seeking help and advice if we need to

### **Aims –**

Our programme aims to have a structured, progressive approach to building knowledge. Our aims develop throughout the programme, and increase in maturity as the children move through school. Our overarching aims for our RSE programme are:

- To generate an atmosphere where questions of a sexual nature can be asked and answered openly without embarrassment and trust and confidentiality are ensured
- To enable pupils to develop knowledge, communication skills and understanding in order to facilitate personal decision-making
- To enable pupils to understand the impact of external factors, such as the media, Internet, peer groups and remain independent decision-makers
- To enable pupils to develop the ability to form positive, non-exploitative relationships
- To enable pupils to be aware of personal, psychological, emotional and physical changes in themselves and others
- To enable pupils to understand the process of human reproduction
- To emphasise the role and the value of family life
- To enable pupils to know what is and what is not legal in matters relating to sexual activity
- To inform pupils of where they can go for further information and advice.
- To enable pupils to keep themselves safe when using the internet.

### **Outcomes –**

The learning outcomes of our programme are stipulated clearly, and reflected in the programme of study teaching staff work from.

### **By the end of Key Stage 1**

#### **Pupils will be able to:**

- Recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans
- Recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity
- Identify and share their feelings with others.
- Recognise safe and unsafe situations.
- Identify and be able to talk with someone they trust.
- Be aware that their feelings and actions have an impact on others.
- Make a friend, talk with them and share feelings.
- Use simple rules for dealing with strangers and for resisting pressure when they feel uncomfortable or at risk.

#### **Pupils will know and understand:**

- That animals, including humans, grow and reproduce\*
- That humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults\*
- The basic rules for keeping themselves safe and healthy.
- About safe places to play and safe people to be with.
- The needs of babies and young people.
- Ways in which they are like and different from others.
- That they have some control over their actions and bodies.
- The names of the main external parts of the body including agreed names for sexual parts.

- Why families are special for caring and sharing.

**Pupils will have considered:**

- Why families are special.
- The similarities and differences between people.
- How their feelings and actions have an impact on other people.

**Pupils will know they have a right to:**

- have their views and opinions listened to
- be treated with kindness and respect
- talk to someone if they are in need of help
- tell someone 'no' if something feels wrong.

**Pupils will know they have the responsibility to:**

- treat others with kindness and respect
- be fair and treat others as they would like to be treated
- let grown ups know when something has happened that they think is wrong
- make decisions which will only have a useful or nice effect on other

**By the end of Key Stage 2**

**Pupils will be able to:**

- Express opinions, for example, about relationships and bullying.
- Listen to and support others.
- Respect other people's viewpoints and beliefs.
- Recognise their changing emotions with friends and family and be able to express their feelings positively.
- Identify adults they can trust and who they can ask for help.
- Be self-confident in a wide range of new situations, such as seeking new friends.
- Form opinions that they can articulate to a variety of audiences.
- Recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves.
- Balance the stresses of life in order to promote their own mental health and wellbeing and that of others.
- See things from other people's viewpoints, for example their parents and their carers.
- Discuss moral questions.
- Listen to, support their friends and manage friendship problems.
- Recognise and challenge stereotypes, for example in relation to gender.
- Recognise the pressure of unwanted physical contact and know ways of resisting it.

**Pupils will know and understand:**

- That the life processes common to humans and other animals include growth and reproduction\*
- About the main stages of the human life cycle\*

- About the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them.
- The many relationships in which they are involved.
- Where individual families and groups can find help.
- How the media impact on forming attitudes.
- About keeping themselves safe when involved with risky activities.
- That their actions have consequences and be able to anticipate the results of them.
- About different forms of bullying people and the feelings of both bullies and victims.
- Why being different can provoke bullying and know why this is unacceptable.
- About and accept a wide range of different family arrangements, for example, second marriages, fostering, extended families and three or more generations living together.

*\*relate to science curriculum at Key stage 2*

**Pupils will have considered:**

- The diversity of lifestyles.
- Others' points of view, including their parents' or carers'.
- Why being different can provoke bullying and why this is unacceptable.
- When it is appropriate to take a risk and when to say no and seek help.
- The diversity of values and customs in the school and in the community.
- The need for trust and love in established relationships.

**Pupils will know they have a right to:**

- have their views and opinions listened to and considered fairly
- be treated with kindness and respect by all around them, whether they agree with them or not
- talk to someone if they are in need of help, and find channels for help independently, whether online, telephone or in person.
- tell someone 'no' if something feels wrong
- keep their own personal space private

**Pupils will know they have the responsibility to:**

- treat others with kindness and respect, whether in or outside of school
- be fair and treat others as they would like to be treated
- treat all people as equal, and avoid discrimination or prejudice at all times
- let grown ups know when something has happened that they think is wrong, either in person, or through reporting channels available to them
- consider decisions before they make them based on whether they will have a beneficial outcome, or the most beneficial outcome, to ensure their path in life is the best one.

**Consultation**

It is important to consult pupils and parents because often content of RSE lessons can have the possibility of being value-based, or include sensitive discussions and learning which parents and children would like to prepare for before it takes place. Consulting parents on issues such as specific vocabulary for parts of the body is an essential way to ensure maximum education and minimum contention are experienced through the programme. Consulting children is an excellent tool to ensure our programme, policy and teaching is up to date, and addresses the ever-changing needs our young people have concerning RSE. As technology

and culture shifts, new challenges arise, and the children are our best guide for understanding how we can best prepare them for a happy, stable and purposeful life.

We will consult with our Governing Board by first showing them any changes to our policy, as well as delivering the main headlines of each subsequent update. This will be done through email, but discussed at committee and full Governing Board. Before an updated policy can be approved, the Governing Board must read through the document to ensure its suitability for our schools.

We will involve pupils and parents by offering opportunities for both groups to give us their views on the first draft of the policy, and then consult them both before subsequent updates of the policy too. This ensures that parents can raise concerns about the RSE curriculum and whether it meets the needs of their children. Another reason for consultation is school and home gain a stronger relationship together working through some potentially difficult areas of a child's development. By having a shared set of objectives that all groups feel invested in, the same values and outcomes can be delivered from home and school, thus enabling more consistent learning.

### **Parental right to request withdrawal**

Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from the sex education aspect of RSE. Legislation brought in through the Children and Social Work Act 2017 gives guidance on which elements parents/carers can withdraw their children from parts of Sex Education that are NOT part of the Relationships or Health education. As an example, puberty and changes to body which fall inside the Health education curriculum area, and as such these are essential parts of our curriculum. Parents also CANNOT withdraw children from the scientific content of reproduction, as seen in the National Curriculum. However, there are several aims in our curriculum which do fall outside the science curriculum, such as safe sex to prevent infection in year 6, which parents and carers may wish to teach themselves. Though we feel this education is absolutely vital for children to prepare them for safe and healthy adult lives, we will respect parent/carers' requests to withdraw. Also, we recognise that there may be areas of our curriculum that you wish to discuss further with our RSE lead or the Headteacher.

Our programme of study is informed by the documents produced by Educator Solutions, a comprehensive and well planned RSE document with excellent illustrations and resources to ensure respectful learning. Our Relationships Education is delivered throughout PATHS programme, and the two compliments each other well, as they're organised into a spiral curriculum to build on previous learning. It is recommended that parents/carers have a discussion with teaching staff before requesting their child is withdrawn, because school staff can reassure and clarify any questions of misunderstandings families may have. We can show you each planned lesson and resource at the beginning of the unit adults may have concerns about, and this will help adults to make decisions based on this. We believe all our RSE teaching is vital for children's development, and encouraging families to be fully clear about our curriculum means we can avoid children being excused without total understanding beforehand. The aims at the beginning of this document are achieved through well planned RSE teaching, and therefore most parents choose to support the school with the RSE curriculum.

## Learning

The programme will be led by the RSE lead. It will be taught by class teachers and teaching assistants where appropriate. RSE will have timetabled sessions each week, though this will vary from class to class.

It will be supported by materials collated and developed by Educator Solutions, with their Key Stage 1 and 2 materials combining to create a programme of study teachers will follow. Training will be delivered, either by the RSE Lead using the materials provided by ES, or by outside agencies if teaching staff identify the need.

The programme will be taught through a range of teaching methods, including pictures, cross curricular writing, videos and role play prepared by the teachers in each class. Where the content is more personal in nature, teachers will ensure anonymity and respect is maintained throughout; those children who find it difficult to keep personal comments from the lesson will be reminded and taught how it is vital for an open and honest lesson that all participants respect that personal comments are not appropriate at times.

We will assess children's learning by keeping a record of key pieces of work for each year group, as well as using the spiral programme and Educator Solutions tool to assess children's learning.

We will identify pupils' needs by assessment questions before lessons, plenaries, quizzes, and many other standard teaching assessments for learning, informing what is taught and who is targeted/supported.

We will respect pupil's differences by ensuring that examples in pictures and learning are diverse and represent all people we will come into contact with in everyday life. We will ensure children have the opportunity to ask questions and explore how diversity can adjust well-being, and how relationships and growing up are very similar for a lot of people scientifically, but can vary hugely for each individual.

We will ensure respect, privacy and confidentiality during our programme by writing, developing and signing a working agreement before we begin teaching our units, ensuring children understand they don't need to contribute if they do not wish to, and by maintaining a high level of mutual respect during discussion and activities.

## Questions

Pupils questions will be answered by both adults and children within the lessons. If the questions are sensitive and/or personal, the question may need to be discussed one to one with the child. Some children may think their question is a silly one, but any appropriate question asked within an RSE lesson will be treated equally and answered in the same way as a question asked in another curriculum area.

There may be opportunities where questions are asked that do not fall under the umbrella of our aims; this is often a worry for teachers and parents alike. However, we have scripts and responses prepared for staff to protect them and the children, and to prevent difficult decisions being made by staff as to whether they will answer or not (see **Protecting our Staff** below).

We will make provision for anonymous questions by providing worry boxes in classrooms. These allow children to write simple or complex questions down for answering; the questions may be anonymous because it concerns them, it is about them, or is something they have heard and do not understand.



We will respond to questions by engaging all children with the question, as it is very likely that if one child is confused or concerned about this topic, others will be too. By discussing it together, using easy to understand language, we not only answer the first question but can broach any other questions or concerns that might emanate from that. We believe that an open and honest conversation, within the bounds of our aims, is the best way for children to learn where the content may be personal, emotional or different to their own experience.

### **Protecting our staff**

Staff have the responsibility to answer questions skilfully and appropriately by:

- using correct agreed vocabulary from our policies,
- answering in an unprejudiced way and without surprise or shock,
- ensuring the questions/answers are not personal
- using assessment for learning tools to ensure children have understood the answer.

By using this policy and appendices, teaching staff will be able to judge their responses carefully, and teach children what they really need to know without fear or embarrassment.

Staff have the right to reword questions which are personal, use inappropriate or incorrect vocabulary or are not easily understood by the class.

Staff focus questioning and learning so it remains age/stage appropriate by ensuring their planning and aims are taken from the curriculum map and guidance in this policy. The vocabulary guidance and curriculum map ensure children's learning and questions remain progressive through the children's schooling.

However, it is quite likely that children's questions will stray from the ascribed areas of learning, and that is entirely acceptable. Teaching staff will use their professional judgement when answering questions, as we need to foster a culture where young people can ask questions about health, sex and relationships so they are prepared for life. A 'sanctioned question' list would defeat the purpose of open and honest conversation with young people. All teaching staff have a shorter document which works in tandem with this policy to give guidance on questioning and answering; all adults are trained to skilfully manage questions to clear up any misconceptions. This is MUCH less preferable to creating mystique around a part of sex; children may wish to learn more by finding other information, which we cannot guarantee is value-free or even factually correct.

### **Safeguarding**

If the programme results in disclosure or difficulty for children, and we have any reason to believe pupils may be unsafe, we are required to report these to our Designated Safeguarding Lead, as we would at any other time.

## **Support**

We are committed to supporting parents and carers, and we will support families with this programme by ensuring that concerns they may have can be discussed with us when necessary. We can also signpost families to resources which may help them concerning RSE and the curriculum we teach.

We will notify parents and carers when particular aspects of relationship and sex education will be taught, by sending letters home to families. This is to ensure families know the type of questions that children may well be asking when they get home, and to give families time to prepare their children before they come to school if they feel this is necessary.

We will communicate to parents and carers about the 'right to be excused' by letter. Parents and carers can request their child is 'excused' from sex education lessons. They may not be excused from relationships education or the statutory science teaching, which includes puberty and reproduction in some plants and animals.

If parents or carers make a request that their child is excused from 'sex education', the school will support that child and family by discussing the elements parents would like to excuse their child from, and agree which lessons their child could receive alternative provision in. The school will make it clear which parts of the programme are statutory and non-statutory, so parents can make an informed decision about any elements they wish to excuse their child from. In line with draft guidance from the DfE, parents and carers are invited to meet with the Headteacher to discuss concerns about sex education. This conversation will also include the detrimental effects of children being 'excused' from sex education lessons, though they may be negated if the families wish to teach sex education at home. It is the school's responsibility to ensure those children who are excused from sex education are given purposeful alternative learning.

## **Balance and equality**

Although traditionally 'sex education' is seen as separate and discrete teaching, we will ensure that the values we teach are balanced throughout the curriculum by regular lessons based around relationships. To support the 'sex education' part of the curriculum, well planned science teaching also addresses this learning, so children see how reproduction and changes in the body are part of 'normal' learning, and not a discrete subject. Relationships education will be progressive and taught throughout every year group, so RSE becomes a consistent part of teaching.

We will ensure equality by providing learning and teaching which is inclusive of variation in gender, sexuality, disability in terms of the resourcing provided. We will also ensure that children receive teaching at the appropriate age/stage to prepare children for adult life, but also to protect those for whom the learning is not yet appropriate or accessible.

We will assess the needs of different pupils by beginning each lesson or sequence of lessons by finding out what the children know already with games, quizzes or other assessment for learning tools. Using this information, we can adjust our teaching to ensure we are providing challenging and appropriate learning for all. Teachers will also refer to our SEN register initially to ensure the content is accessible for children

with SEN; those who will not access the learning will have differentiated provision so they can make progress at the appropriate age/stage.

Consultation with pupils gives us a viewpoint on what our children need to learn to keep them safe and healthy. As society changes how young people develop and respond to people around them, we need to ensure our curriculum also adjusts in response to this. The RSE lead will lead consultation with groups of children to ensure our programme is relevant, addresses particular needs that may be sensitive at the time, and maintains parity with other curriculum areas like online safety (see **Online Safety policy**) in which developments in technology have an impact on how relationships can change.

### **School policy parity**

This policy compliments and works in line with the following policies:

Safeguarding Policy

Online Safety Policy

Health Policy

Behaviour Policy