

Marsh Green Primary School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2023-2024



Approved by: School Governing Body	Date: 22 nd March 2023
Next review due by: 22 nd March, 2024	

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
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
- To teach pupils to recognise situations (both on and offline) which may be unsafe, and learn about strategies to seek support and guidance.
- That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous
- To help pupils become responsible, respectful and discerning users of technology.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained primary school we must provide relationships and health education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We are required to teach the statutory elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum and within statutory health and relationships education.

In addition to statutory requirements, the DfE continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a Sex Education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. We are complying with this recommendation by delivering 2 additional non-statutory sex education lessons in Y6. (See Section 5 below).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education guidance](#) issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At Marsh Green Primary School we teach RSE as set out in this policy, as part of our wider PSHE programme (also see our **PSHE Policy**).

3. Definition

Relationship and Sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up and involves learning about relationships, sex education including reproduction and our bodies (including puberty), staying safe, healthy relationships, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

It is about the understanding of the importance of family life, stable, loving and healthy relationships, respect, love and care.

RSE is about developing children's emotional literacy and the social and cultural development of pupils. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

4. Where in the curriculum?

RSE is not delivered in isolation. It is firmly rooted within the school's framework for Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE - see PSHE policy for statutory and non-statutory content). It is essential in:

- Developing confidence and responsibility;
- Preparing pupils to play an active role as citizens;
- Developing a healthier, safer lifestyle;
- Developing good relationships and respecting themselves and others.

RSE is addressed progressively in each year group, in a manner that is appropriate to the development of pupils at particular ages. It is integrated into the school curriculum, so that it forms part of children's normal learning. This includes, but is not exclusive to, the PSHE, RE, Science and Computing curriculum.

5. Delivery of RSE

The RSE teaching programme is tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of children. 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. These lessons and conversations will always be dealt with in a sensitive manner. In the early primary school years, education about relationships will focus on friendship, bullying and the building of self-esteem. In the later primary school years, children will learn about puberty and how a baby is born. All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty, before they experience the onset of physical changes. This is a statutory element of Health education.

Sensitivity about how issues are addressed is paramount. Children, who are easily embarrassed, will be identified and plans put in place to support them in overcoming their embarrassment in future. Children who are known to have been subjected to sexual abuse, will also be dealt with sensitively and individual plans put in place where needed. The Headteacher will inform teachers of any potential issues relating to individual children, on a case by case basis, while still maintaining utmost confidentiality.

In the EYFS, RSE is taught mainly within Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Understanding the World.

In KS1 and KS2, RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in statutory health and relationships education, religious education (RE), Computing education and Physical Education (PE). Cross-curricular themes are often used in all subjects to embed learning.

In KS1 the following science curriculum objectives which give opportunities to deliver the RSE programme are as follows:

- ☐ To identify what makes us special, as people;
- ☐ To describe some of the ways children change as they grow from being babies;
- ☐ To describe why we sometimes look like older people in our families.
- ☐ To show that we all grow and change, as do all living things;
- ☐ To show that some changes are social, that we become more independent and able to think about others as well as ourselves;
- ☐ To describe the life cycle of humans and other animals.

In KS2, the science curriculum objectives which give opportunities to deliver the RSE programme are as follows:

- ☐ To describe the stages of growth and development in humans;
- ☐ To explain the changes experienced in puberty;
- ☐ To talk with knowledge about birth and reproduction.

Key Stage 1 (age 5-7 years)

- ☐ Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense
- ☐ Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- ☐ Describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

Key Stage 2 (age 7-11 years)

- ☐ Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- ☐ Describe the changes as humans develop to old age
- ☐ Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents
- ☐ Recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function

Relationships education across KS1&2 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

Health Education across KS1&2 focuses on:

- ☐ Mental Wellbeing
- ☐ Internet Safety and Harms
- ☐ Physical health and fitness
- ☐ Healthy Eating
- ☐ Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco
- ☐ Health and Prevention
- ☐ Basic First aid
- ☐ The changing adolescent body (puberty)

Year 5 and 6

In years 5 and 6, the children will be taught about the statutory element of health education: changing adolescent body. These sessions will be supported by (where appropriate), a trained health professional.

Girls and boys will be taught these lessons in both their usual classroom groups and additionally in single sex groupings. They will be taught about both male and female changes. We feel that children will be more comfortable to ask questions and discuss the objectives of these lessons in single sex groupings, however think that it is essential that pupils understanding both male and female changes. Following these sessions, the children will have time to reflect as a whole class, to enable the teacher to assess their understanding, share key questions and teachings from the lessons. They will be given the opportunity to ask questions anonymously and privately (if they wish to), to ensure they feel comfortable in their surroundings and understand the facts of these lessons. A question/curiosity box will be available in the classroom, to give children every opportunity to ask questions, even if they feel uncomfortable or lack confidence in a whole class setting.

These lessons will focus on:

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- Menstrual wellbeing including key facts about the menstrual cycle.

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings (*health*)

Additional Sex Education in Y6: pupils in year 6 also receive 2 stand-alone sex education lessons on how a baby is conceived, which is the non-statutory content and the only lessons that parents can withdraw their child from.

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).

See our website for our [PSHE Education Curriculum Overviews](#).

6. Parents/carers

Copies of our PSHE medium term plans are available for all parents/carers to view on the PSHE page of our school website. This clearly shows the units and objectives that will be taught in each year group, each term, from the RSE framework.

Additionally, parents will be informed of the units being taught on a half termly basis on the year group overviews that are shared on the school curriculum section of our website.

Parents can arrange to speak to a member of staff about the content of any of these lessons within the term that they are being taught.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from any of the RSE that is part of statutory science, relationships or health education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

7. Answering Pupils' Sex Education Questions

We encourage curiosity in children as it is an important part of their learning and children ask questions related to sex education, both in and outside of lessons. In the lessons, children will be encouraged to make a note of any issues they would like to discuss. Anonymity is respected and a box for questions is available for children to use as necessary. Questions raised by the children will be answered in simple, age appropriate terms. Children who are withdrawn from a lesson may also ask a question in relation to sex education outside of the lesson time. We feel it is important to answer questions honestly, with factual information and in an age appropriate way. If we have a concern with regards to safeguarding due to the nature of a question we would follow our safeguarding procedures. We need to be mindful that children who don't have their questions answered may look to other sources for information, such as the internet, which might provide inaccurate information.

8. Sexuality

Government guidance states that:

‘In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.’

‘To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.’

‘Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all pupils.’

‘In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.’

(DfE, Relationships education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance, 2019)

It is important to build tolerance and understanding and not allow prejudice against people whose sexuality is different to their own. Primary aged children may already be aware of and have ideas about sexuality, sometimes based on inaccurate information and stereotypes. RSE will include discussion of sexuality in a sensitive manner and will include positive representations of homosexual, bisexual, transgender and non-binary people.

Discussion of relationships will not be solely about heterosexual relationships. The word ‘partner’ will be used to describe relationships.

9. Sexism, homophobia and transphobia

Challenging sexism, homophobia and transphobia is part of Marsh Green Primary School school approach to equal

opportunities and combating bullying. Bullying in whatever form is unacceptable and children will be taught about the emotional stress and harm caused by this.

At Marsh Green Primary School, sexist, homophobic or transphobic comments made by children are handled in a sensitive way, especially as some children may not fully understand what they are saying or appreciate the consequences. Guidance will be sought from the Headteacher about how to approach and deal with such sensitive issues. Parents/carers will be informed of any such comments and further meetings held if necessary.

10. Religious and Cultural beliefs

The school is aware of cultural and religious differences, in relation to RSE and this will be taken into account in planning and delivery. It will not be assumed however that all members of particular religious or cultural groups necessarily hold the same beliefs about RSE issues.

11. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their CPD programme where training needs are identified. The PSHE subject leader will complete a wider range of training, to be kept up to date

with legislation and resources. Where appropriate, the PSHE lead will deliver in school training based on CPD that they have received.

The Headteacher 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.

12. Safeguarding, Confidentiality and disclosure

Marsh Green Primary School Primary school has clear procedures for safeguarding children (specified in the schools Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy).

School procedures will be followed in terms of confidentiality and disclosure of information. All disclosures will be referred to the Headteacher, who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). In the absence of the DSL, this will be referred to the deputy DSLs or another member of the DSL team.

13. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

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

PSHE subject leader/team

The PSHE subject leader/team is responsible for monitoring the coverage of RSE, through the PSHE scheme of work and other key areas of the curriculum. They are responsible for monitoring progress and keeping staff informed of new information and resources that will help them to deliver an outstanding PSHE curriculum.

Teachers

Teachers are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

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 Headteacher.

Pupils

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

14. Disseminating and Monitoring the RSE Policy

A full copy will be published on the school website and made freely available to staff and parents. Copies will also be supplied to other professionals whose work relates to PSHE, including RSE and Health Education, or who may be involved in its delivery.

Sex Education programme: parent/carer withdrawal form

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Optional: reason for withdrawing child (ren) from non-national curriculum for science components of sex education <i>Please note that removing children from sex education can affect your child(ren) and their relationships with others.</i> <i>Children will also discuss sex education lessons on the playground and outside of school.</i>			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			