



Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Review September 2024



Context

In February 2019, the Department for Education (DfE) published guidance for schools on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (RSHE). Schools are expected to teach according to this guidance from the summer term of 2021.

'Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls; and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole school approach.' (Department for Education, 2019)

This guidance replaces the Sex and Relationship Education guidance (2000).

What is Relationships Education?

Relationships Education in primary school is teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them.

For more information, see Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (DfE 2020)

What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. It is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up and relationships. Some aspects are taught in science (for example, the life cycle), and others are taught as part of personal, social and health education (PSHE).

A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body and reproduction. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

Is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) mandatory?

No. Whilst Relationships Education and Health Education will be compulsory in all primary schools from the summer term of 2021, Sex Education is not mandatory in primary schools. The DfE states that it is for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on Sex Education beyond the mandatory science curriculum to meet the needs of their pupils.

As a maintained primary school we must provide Relationships Education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Relationships and Sex Education at Lewknor Church of England Primary School

The aims of Relationships and Sex Education at our school are to:

- Provide a safe 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.

Policy development

The RSHE Policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a school working group pulled together all relevant information including national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to give their feedback about the school's policy and curriculum map.
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE through carrying out pupil voice interviews.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is set out in a separate document entitled Jigsaw PSHE Content Overview, which is available on our website. We use the Jigsaw 3-11 scheme of work to deliver the RSHE curriculum.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, 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 the pupils are fully informed.

Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is taught within the personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum.

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions in Years 5 and 6 delivered by a trained health professional, such as a school nurse.

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

In addition to what is covered in the national curriculum for science, sex education will focus on:

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

All of 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.

How delivery of the content will be accessible to all pupils

Where teachers feel necessary, teaching and resources will be differentiated to address the needs of children with special educational needs or those who are deemed as vulnerable, in order for them to have full access to this area of the curriculum.

Confidentiality

The school's work in RSHE will result in sensitive issues being discussed, either with groups of pupils or with individuals.

We will:

- reassure pupils that their best interests will be maintained
- encourage pupils to talk to their parents / carers and provide support in this if necessary
- ensure that pupils are aware that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality
- inform pupils that if an external agency needs to be informed, they will be told first and supported appropriately
- uphold safeguarding guidelines and procedures if there is any possibility of abuse
- ensure that pupils are informed of sources of confidential help

Health Professionals

All health professionals, who visit school, will be made fully aware of the school's RSHE Policy. All visitors are expected to adhere to the school's Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct.

Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Board

The Governing Board will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE. They have responsibility to approve this policy.

Class teachers

Class teachers are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- 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 RSHE

Class teachers do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Those who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Pupils

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

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education, except from those elements that are in the national curriculum for science.

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

Parents are not obliged to give their reasons for wishing to withdraw their child but are encouraged to discuss the matter with the class teacher or a senior member of staff.

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

Training

Staff will be trained on the delivery of RSHE as necessary as part of the school's professional development cycle.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the RSHE Subject Leader and the Headteacher through asking the following questions on an annual basis:

- Are our aims being met?
- How can we tell?
- Have there been any difficulties?
- Why have they arisen?
- What have been the successes?
- What made these possible?
- What do parents and pupils think about our policy?
- Are there any local or national initiatives in which the school should join?
- How can the policy be improved?

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if government guidance changes. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher and shared with and approved by the governing body.

Overview of RSHE

Relationships education expectations

By the end of primary, pupils will need to know:

Families and people who care for the pupil

- That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- The characteristics of healthy family life: commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty; protection and care for children and other family members; the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
- That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- That marriage (available to both opposite and same sex couples) and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- The conventions of courtesy and manners.
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- 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 those in positions of authority.
- About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.

- What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

- That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- 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.
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- How information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults, including that it's not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they're heard.
- How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- Where to get advice (e.g. family, school and/or other sources).

Health education expectations

By the end of primary, pupils will need to know:

Mental wellbeing

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.
- That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.
- How to judge whether what they're feeling and how they're behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests.
- Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it's very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.

- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.
- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they're worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
- It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.

Internet safety and harms

- That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.
- About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.
- That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).
- How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they're worried about their health.

Healthy eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.

Health and prevention

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss or unexplained changes to the body.

- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
- The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.

Basic first aid

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.
- Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.

Changing adolescent bodies

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

Sex education expectations

There is no list of expectations for sex education at the primary level because it is not compulsory, but the DfE recommends that schools should:

- Make sure boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings.
- Draw on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in science lessons to explain how a baby is conceived and born.

At Lewknor Church of England Primary School the school nurse team covers the above points during lessons in the Upper Juniors class.

Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from 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			