

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



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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.

Statutory Requirements

As a primary academy school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. We do not have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. 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. At this school we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents and approved by the trust. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- **Review** – The Deputy CEO reviewed all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance to produce a draft template. This was reviewed by the Executive Leadership Team and Headteachers and approved by the CEO.
- **Staff consultation** – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- **Parent/stakeholder consultation** – parents and any interested parties were sent information about the policy and were invited to ask questions and make comments.
- **Pupil consultation** – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE.
- **Ratification** – once amendments were made in light of the consultations, the policy was shared with senior trust staff and the Academy Standard Committee and ratified.

Definition

Relationships Education

Relationships Education is a statutory requirement for all primary school pupils and focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships.

This includes:

- Families and people who care for us, emphasising the diversity of family structures.
- Caring friendships, exploring the qualities of healthy friendships.
- Respectful relationships, promoting mutual respect and understanding.
- Online relationships, teaching safe and respectful behaviour in digital environments.

- Being safe, ensuring pupils understand personal boundaries and how to seek help if they feel unsafe.

The primary aim of Relationships Education is to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to build healthy, respectful, and safe relationships throughout their lives.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education, as it is considered essential learning for all pupils to navigate modern society safely and respectfully.

Sex Education

Sex Education in primary schools is non-statutory, except for the biological aspects covered within the science curriculum. Any additional teaching beyond this statutory requirement is at the discretion of the school. At our school, the focus of Sex Education includes:

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

Sex Education lessons are designed to be age-appropriate and sensitive to the needs of all pupils, helping them to understand and manage the changes they experience as they grow. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory aspects of Sex Education. Requests for withdrawal must be submitted in writing to the headteacher, using the form provided in Appendix 3 of this policy. The school will provide alternative educational activities for pupils who are withdrawn from these lessons.

By clearly differentiating between Relationships Education and Sex Education, this policy aims to ensure transparency and clarity for parents, enabling them to make informed decisions about their child's education while supporting the school's mission to foster safe, respectful, and well-informed pupils.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, considering 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.

Primary sex education will focus on:

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

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

Delivery of RSE

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 religious education (RE). Pupils 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

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

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).

Roles and Responsibilities

The CEO will approve the RSE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher 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 Parents' right to withdraw).

Staff 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/non-science 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. All staff will be responsible for teaching RSE within our school.

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

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. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to

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

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. 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.

Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSE in our school is monitored by the Headteacher through:

- Lesson observations
- Consultation with staff, children & families

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed by the trust every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the CEO.

Appendix 1: Relationships and sex education curriculum map (attached under PSHE overview)

PSHE

At Wrenthorpe Academy, we teach Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) as a whole-school approach to underpin children's development as people and because we believe that this also supports their learning capacity.

The One Life Programme offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought-through Scheme of Work which brings consistency and progression to our children's learning in this vital curriculum area.

The overview of the programme can be seen on the school website.

Statutory Relationships and Health Education

At Wrenthorpe Academy we value PSHE as one way to support children's development as human beings, to enable them to understand and respect who they are, to empower them with a voice and to equip them for life and learning. We include the statutory Relationships and Health Education within our whole-school PSHE Programme.

This is supplemented by our school's RE & RSE Growing Up Safe: Whole School Approach (GUS) programme, delivered in association with relationship and sex education specialists Big Talk Education who provide highly trained facilitators who have specialist knowledge in how to answer children's questions about reproduction, puberty etc. in an age-appropriate manner

The overview of the curriculum can be seen on the school website.

Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should know.

Topic	Pupils should know
Families and people who care about me	• 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 represents 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 from them (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

Topic	Pupils should know
	• 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 is 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 are 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

Appendix 3: 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	

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