

# Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Academic Year 2023-2024



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This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies and guidelines for Inclusion and Safeguarding and with regard to the [DFE: RSE and Health Statutory Guidance](#)

### Definition

According to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance 2000 and the 2014 supplementary guidance, SRE is *‘learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex... It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships’*.

Relationships Education includes family relationships, friendships and relationships with peers and adults, healthy and unhealthy relationships, the characteristics of positive relationships, relationships online and the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance (DfE 2019) states that these subjects *‘...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.’*

Relationship and Sex Education is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching. (SRE Guidance DfE 2000)

### Aims

The Connect Education Trust aim to provide a holistic education for all pupils. Every pupil will receive their full entitlement to RSE regardless of their educational ability, gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity or faith. We aim to support pupils in their emotional, cultural and social, as well as academic development.

A carefully formulated programme for RSE is crucial if we are to prepare children and young people to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood. Our Relationships Education curriculum is inclusive and meets the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND). We also aim to promote gender equality as part of this inclusivity.

This Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy aims to *‘explore attitudes and values with pupils about relationships, emotions, self-esteem and personal safety.’* Children and young people will develop skills in order to make positive decisions about their health related behaviour. During RSE pupils will *‘develop personal and social skills and a positive attitude to growing up’*.

Our schools aim to promote an atmosphere that allows questioning where questions raised will be answered accurately and with sensitivity.

We believe that appropriate education about relationships and sex will:

- Help our pupils gain self-confidence, develop self-esteem and self-discipline

- Provide pupils with knowledge and understanding of a variety of relationships
- Help our pupils develop positive relationships with one another and with adults
- Develop the pupil's ability to identify any concerns they have about a relationship
- Encourage respect for one another's individual thinking and attitudes
- Encourage good manners and politeness.
- Give pupils an awareness of the process of growing up and the changes

The aim of SRE is NOT to:

- encourage pupils to become sexually active at a young age
- promote a particular sexual orientation
- sexualise children and young people

These aims are fulfilled by teaching and learning in both the taught and the informal curriculum. We deliver the taught curriculum mainly through PSHE, Science, Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC), and English education, but other opportunities to reinforce learning will occur in other parts of the teaching programme.

### **Moral and Values Framework**

Our relationships and sex education programme reflects the ethos of all our schools and British Values and encourages the following:

- Respect for self and others
- Development of self-awareness and resilience for themselves and for others
- Compassion, forgiveness and care when people do not conform to their way of life
- An acknowledgement and understanding of diversity regarding religion and culture

The sex education elements contained in the National Curriculum science orders are mandatory for all pupils of primary and secondary age, and in primary school covers anatomy, puberty and biological aspects of sexual reproduction.

The Learning and Skills Act (2000) requires that young people

- learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children
- are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned

### **Objectives**

The school provides a graduated, age-appropriate SRE programme which emphasises the social and emotional aspects of relationships. The SRE Policy supports the development of our pupils by teaching them about changes in their body and relationships. Pupils can expect to be taught the names and functions of external body parts, and be informed about puberty before it begins. This is taught as part of a Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme which may also include subjects such as citizenship and drug and alcohol awareness, personal hygiene and safety.

## Teaching and Learning of RSE

RSE is important because:

- it is a body of knowledge essential to children's and young people's wellbeing and understanding of self and relationships it prepares children and young people for puberty
- provides pupils with access to correct information about their bodies and those of the opposite sex
- develops pupil's acceptable vocabulary for communication about their bodies
- builds positive attitudes
- provides pupils with knowledge about the process of human reproduction
- enables children and young people to acquire skills and attitudes about loving and stable relationships
- provides the opportunity for pupils to understand personal safety and hygiene

## Delivering the curriculum

Relationships Education will be taught as part of the PSHE curriculum. Lessons are taught by staff who are trained in delivering the specific content of the lessons. Aspects of Relationships and Sex Education will be delivered by the class teacher but the school nurse and/or other invited visitors may be used for aspects of RSE

Ground rules will be established in class and pupils reminded of these. Special consideration will be given when teaching particularly sensitive content and staff will be fully aware of the varying needs within their class.

We aim to create and maintain a safe environment within which all pupils feel able to ask questions and discuss issues openly. For any pupil wishing to discuss something confidential, relating to the lesson content, an opportunity will be provided.

- RSE will be delivered through themes and topics as identified in the school's Science, PSHE, SMSC and Citizenship. Some may be discrete units or lesson.
- Work will be covered with individuals, groups or whole class as planned by the class teacher.
- Puberty education will be introduced in Year 4, and in Year 5 and 6 and for some lessons boys and girls may be taught separately. Opportunities will be arranged for single sex question sessions to enable children to ask questions without embarrassment or anxiety
- The schools will use a suitable scheme that has been approved by the Enfield Learning Trust
- Details of the RSE curriculum can be found on each school's website under PSHE

## Answering Pupil Questions

Pupils of the same age may be developmentally at different stages to their peers, which may lead to a range of differing types of behaviours and/or questions. Teachers should take this into consideration during lessons and teaching methods should reflect these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) i.e. opportunities for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups.

If a pupil asks a difficult question, the adult will use their professional judgement in deciding how to answer it. This may be through class discussion, individual discussion or encouraging the pupil to talk to their parent.

Questions should only be invited from the pupils in the context of work they have been involved in - i.e. watching a video, part of a topic.

Pupils should be encouraged not to use "slang" or "family" names and terms. The teacher should always use correct biological terminology. This may mean that a teacher has to interpret/reword a question before reading it out and answering it.

Where a question is deemed inappropriate either because it is not connected to the subject matter being dealt with or because it goes beyond the scope of the school sex education policy/ age/ stage of development of the pupils, the teacher must either decide to:

- Leave those questions to the end and invite pupil who have not had their questions answered to speak to the teacher on their own
- Explain that they are only answering questions on a particular topic. In either case the most appropriate action may be for the teacher to suggest that the pupil asks his/ her parents.

Where a pupil asks a question about sex, out of the context of sex education lessons or a related topic the teacher should speak to the child individually to try to ascertain what has prompted the question e.g. "Why did you want to know that?" The teacher can then respond in one of the ways suggested above.

### **Assessment**

The Relationships and Sex Education (part of the PSHE curriculum) has been developed to include learning objectives and assessment opportunities to enable the teacher to make judgements about pupils' learning and progress.

Staff delivering the Relationships curriculum will critically reflect on their teaching and best practice will be shared through lesson observations, monitoring of planning and pupil's work and training opportunities.

Comments on pupil's learning and progress in Relationships Education, as part of their learning in PSHE, will be reported to parents and carers in the summer term in their End of Year report.

### **Use of Visitors or Other Agencies**

There are various people who can resource and support school based relationship and sex education. These people may include the school nurse and other health professionals. A teacher will always remain in the classroom when a visitor is present.

### **Working with parents/carers and the wider community**

Our schools are aware that the primary role of sex education lies with parents and carers. Therefore, we wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents.

In Key Stage 2, a letter will be sent to parents/carers to inform them of plans to begin the Sex Education unit of work in the term it is due to be taught. This letter will give a summary of the studies to be undertaken and give the parents an opportunity to withdraw their child from these lessons. A screening to parents of the DVD that will be shown to pupils may be organised prior to the teaching taking place.

Under the Education Act 1996 pupils can be withdrawn by their parents from the part of sex education that is outside the compulsory elements of sex education contained in the science national curriculum (currently taught in Year 5).

Parents wanting to exercise the right are invited to discuss this with the Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher who will explore the concerns of parents and the possibilities of adjusting the programme or approach and will discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the pupil.

Following this discussion, if a **parent still wishes to withdraw the pupil we would ask that the request be submitted in writing to the Headteacher**. Once a pupil has been withdrawn they cannot take part in sex education until the request for withdrawal has been removed. This will be reviewed with the parents each year.

### **Withdrawal from Relationships Education**

Parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education.

*'Relationships Education includes the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults...Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.'*

*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance (DfE 2019)*

The content of these subjects including safety (and online safety) – are important for all pupils to be taught.

### **Safeguarding and confidentiality**

Teachers conduct sex education in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. As a general rule a pupil's confidentiality will be maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. However, whilst encouraging a trusting relationship between staff and pupils, if this person believes that the pupil is at risk or in danger, she/he is to talk to the designated teacher for child protection who may confer with the Headteacher before any decision is made. The pupil concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and the reasons why. Staff should always follow the Trust and the London Borough of Enfield's child protection procedures to observe, record and refer all Child Protection issues. See safeguarding and child protection policy.

### **Monitoring:**

This policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher and the Board of Trustees, and monitored by the Senior Leadership Team member for PHSE at each School. It will be reviewed annually.