



## **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy**

### **Introduction**

This Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy has been written by the Personal Development Lead and Head Teacher, in consultation with the staff and Governor Board. The content of the policy and curriculum have been amended to include the new DfE requirements for Primary Relationships Education, which became statutory from the summer term 2021. The policy will be available to read on our school website and a hard copy will be available, on request, from the school office.

### **What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?**

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships and health. The purpose of RSE is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values which they will need to lead safe, fulfilling, enjoyable relationships. This will help them to go on beyond primary school, to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing. In line with the DfE 2019 guidance, the focus at Hester's Way Primary School will be on providing the fundamental building blocks for positive and safe relationships, including with family, friends and online. This will sit alongside our focus on healthy lifestyles and positive mental health. The key elements of RSE are divided into 5 sections: Families and people who care for me; Caring friendships; Respectful relationships; Online relationships; Being safe.

### **Aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**

Our aim for all children at Hester's Way Primary School is that they grow up healthy, happy, safe and able to manage challenges and opportunities, as well as make healthy, informed decisions, in modern Britain. This is so that our pupils become positive, respectful citizens, with success future outcomes. Research has shown that a comprehensive RSE curriculum can help young people to feel more positive about themselves and to understand what a healthy relationship looks like, as well as to delay the age at which they become sexually active. Young people who feel good about themselves are more knowledgeable and confident about relationships, more likely to be discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and are also more likely to have healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships. All adults at our school, work towards achieving these aims for RSE in our school.

### **Statutory Requirements**

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools from the summer term 2021. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools; however, puberty is

covered in the RSE content and the DfE continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.

In addition, the National Curriculum for science includes content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. At Hester's Way Primary School, we will make links between this science work and our PSHE curriculum and all questions will be responded to in an age appropriate manner.

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Our RSE curriculum is key to this provision. Other curriculum areas covering relevant issues are taught in: Personal, Social, Emotional and Health (PSHE), Physical Education (PE), Computing, Religious Education (RE), British Fundamental Values and Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development. Please find our Curriculum on our school website <https://hesterswayprimaryschool.co.uk/>

Under the new statutory guidance, parents cannot withdraw their child from RSE. Parents may only withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. Should any parent wish to withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science, we will uphold that right. We would, however, welcome a discussion around any concerns before a parent makes a final decision.

## **Equal Opportunities**

The law now states that all pupils should have access to Relationships Education and Health Education that is relevant to their particular needs. At Hester's Way Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that all children in our school receive their entitlement to RSE. We will carefully consider special educational needs or disability, gender, sexual orientation and age, nationality, religion, cultural and linguistic background when planning and delivering RSE. In relation to nationality, sexual orientation, religion and cultural diversity, we value the different backgrounds of our pupils and, in addressing different views and beliefs, seek to promote tolerance and understanding.

With regard to sexuality, it is important that our pupils are taught about the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality and will cover LGBTQ content when teaching about different types of families.

In order to ensure the RSE Curriculum meets the needs of all:

- we will not promote one particular lifestyle over another
- we will not seek to gain consensus, but will accept and celebrate difference
- we will encourage respect and discourage abuse and exploitation
- we will not ask children to represent the views of a particular religious or cultural group to their peers, unless they choose to do so.

In relation to those with special educational needs or disability, we will review our RSE programme to ensure that provision is made for those with additional needs. We will consider:

- their level of vulnerability
- their need to learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- their need to develop self-esteem and positive body image
- the need to involve all staff, in policy development, planning and training
- the management of personal care
- clarity about sources of support for pupils.

## **Whole School Approach**

The Personal Development Lead (PDL) has roles and responsibilities for PSHE and our RSE curriculum. They contribute to the intent (plans) and are responsible for reviewing and evaluating RSE at our school, reporting to the Headteacher. The PDL lead will assist staff in their planning and delivery of the RSE curriculum. They will liaise with PSHE advisors and external advisors, as well as audit, plan and evaluate staff training needs.

Teaching staff are all involved in the school's RSE provision. As well as delivering the curriculum, they all play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSE. They will be assisted in their work by provision of relevant resources, background information and access to appropriate training, support and advice from other members of staff.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some RSE lessons and also play an important pastoral support role with pupils. They will have access to information about the RSE programme and will be supported in their pastoral role.

Governors have responsibility for school policies. They will be consulted about the RSE provision and policy and will be assisted in monitoring its implementation by the PDL, Headteacher and staff.

Parents/carers have a legal right to have information about the school's RSE provision. They may have access at any point to the programme of work and are invited to come into school to discuss the content of the lessons and to view the resources used. However, under the new statutory guidance, parents cannot withdraw their child from RSE. As noted above, parents may only withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. The school will, however, seek and take account of parent/carer views and aims to develop a strong partnership approach to RSE.

Pupils have an entitlement to RSE and pastoral support appropriate to their age and circumstances. We will consult children (e.g. through Pupil Voice and School Council) about their perception of the strengths of our RSE programme and the areas to be further developed.

Outside agencies and speakers may be involved in contributing to RSE lessons. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to the pupils' needs. Any resources which a visitor wishes to use or distribute will be discussed and agreed with the Head Teacher, PDL and class teacher beforehand.

## Teaching RSE

We follow the PSHE Association Scheme of Work, and use resources from Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL) schemes. These are graduated age-appropriate programme.

The key lessons in each year group are delivered as a discrete unit within our PSHE curriculum. The main RSE programme will be primarily delivered by the class teacher. We understand that, at times, children will benefit from varying methods of delivering the RSE curriculum. For example, we will use single-sex groups or small group teaching where this will help us to meet the needs of the children more effectively. We will use team teaching where this enables us to best use teacher expertise. We will always ensure there are positive educational reasons for each method of delivery.

By the end of primary school children should know:

Families and people who care for 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.
- 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.
- Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.
- 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.

These are set out in the Department for Education SRE Statutory Guidance.

## Ground Rules

RSE is taught in a safe, non-judgmental environment where adults and children are confident that they will be respected. Specific ground rules will be established at the beginning of any RSE work, in addition to those already used in the classroom.

These rules will ensure that:

- We take turns to speak
- We use kind and positive words
- We listen to each other
- We have the right to pass
- We only use names when giving compliments or when being positive
- We respect each other's privacy (confidentiality)
  
- We will not ask or talk about personal experiences
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used
- The meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way

### Pupil questions

Teachers will establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. They will also set the tone by speaking in a matter of fact way and ensure that pupils discuss issues in a manner which discourages any giggling or silliness. We acknowledge that sensitive and complex issues will arise in RSE, as students will naturally ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it will be guided in a way which reflects the stated school aims and curriculum content for RSE.

As a first principle, we will answer questions relating to the planned curriculum for that age group or below to the whole class. We will answer questions relating to areas beyond the planned curriculum for that age group, in a sensitive and age appropriate way, only to the children who have asked the question. If a member of staff is uncertain about the answer to a question, or indeed whether they wish to answer it, they will seek guidance from the PDL or a senior leader.

During or after sessions, pupils will be encouraged to write down questions anonymously and place these in a class question box, which allows the teacher time to prepare age appropriate answers before the next session. Teachers will respond to all questions that they reasonably can, as we need to consider that pupils will most likely try and find answers online to any unanswered queries and may become misinformed. When answering questions, we shall ensure that sharing personal information by adults, students or their families is discouraged.

Where the question indicates the need for pastoral support, the conversation will be deferred to a time outside the teaching session and other colleagues may be involved. Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibility of

## Ground Rules for RSHE

- G** Giggling is okay!
- R** Respect what others say; no put-downs.
- O** Okay to pass on a question or activity if something feels too private.
- U** Understand others' feelings, be sensitive, listen and respect their differences.
- N** No personal questions or stories from pupils or teachers.
- D** Discuss puberty topics responsibly outside the classroom.
- R** Remember to ask questions if you are unsure about anything.
- U** Use the correct names for body parts - ask if you can't remember.
- L** Let the teacher know if you want to speak to them privately.
- E** Encourage others to participate and get involved.
- S** Speak for yourself; use 'I' statements and don't refer to others by name or by pointing.

abuse, coercion or sexual exploitation, teachers will pass this information to the designated person for child protection, in line with school Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

## **Resources**

We use the PSHE Association, Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL) resources, as well as the NSPCC and other reputable agencies recommended resources, when planning and delivering the RSE Curriculum. We will avoid a 'resource-led' approach to delivering RSE, instead focusing on the needs of the children and our planned learning objectives. We will carefully select resources which meet these objectives. We will carefully evaluate teacher resources, leaflets and videos, before using them.

We will select resources which:

- are consistent with our curriculum for RSE
- relate to the aims and objectives of this policy
- are suitable to the age, maturity, needs, linguistic proficiency and ability of the children
- are up-to-date in factual content
- are produced by a reputable organisation
- do not show unfair bias e.g. towards a commercial product
- avoid racial, gender and sexual stereotyping
- encourage active and participative learning
- conform to the legal requirements

## **Confidentiality**

All teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. In our school we have a clear expectations about confidentiality through Code of Conduct, Safer Working Practises and other safeguarding policies.

As such:

- staff are unable to offer absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help
- children will be reassured that staff will act in their best interests and that this may involve sharing information if the child is at risk of harm
- the Child Protection and Safeguarding policies will be used regarding any need to share information.

We recognise that because effective RSE may alert children to what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. All staff are aware of the Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and will report the disclosure to the designated person for child protection immediately.

## **Staff Training**

Teaching RSE can be very rewarding, but we understand that, in order to feel confident, staff need opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes. Teaching staff attend and disseminate high quality training from the GHLL . We will continue to discuss

relevant issues and, where appropriate, arrange additional training to enable staff members to feel confident in delivering the curriculum for RSE. We will also encourage the sharing of good practice. Those with special responsibility for the development of RSE will be offered opportunities to consult with advisors and attend training courses.

### **Working with Parents, Carers and our School Community**

Parents and carers are the key figures in supporting their children through the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and relationships education. Therefore we seek to work in partnership with parents and carers when planning and delivering RSE. We will encourage this partnership by:

- informing parents and carers by letter or leaflet of forthcoming RSE topics
- sharing the curriculum and resources
- gathering parents' views on the RSE Policy and taking these into account when it is being reviewed
- providing supportive information about parents' role in RSE

Parents and carers will be given access to this on the school website. It is also available, on request, from the school office. As noted above, under the new statutory guidance, parents cannot withdraw their child from RSE. Parents may only withdraw their child from sex education beyond the national curriculum for science. The school will make alternative arrangements for children whose parents or carers withdraw them, which will include supporting parents in finding ways to deliver the content at home. Any parent or carer who wishes to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE should, in the first instance, contact the Headteacher to discuss this further. An initial discussion will focus on which areas of RSE are currently statutory and non-statutory and we will aim to develop a clearer understanding of the learning objectives and approaches taken. Parents or carers will be asked to reconfirm their decision to withdraw each time RSE is planned for their child's class/year group.

### **Monitoring, Evaluating and Reviewing**

Monitoring and evaluation of this policy is the responsibility of the Governing Board. Information will be gathered from the Head Teacher, the Personal Development Lead, staff, pupils and parents to inform judgements about effectiveness.

### **Other policies**

This policy will be used in conjunction with these policies:

Acceptable User  
Allegations Management  
Anti-Bullying and Hate Policy  
Attendance  
Complaints  
Child Protection/Safeguarding Policy  
Early Help Offer  
Online or E-Safety Policy (This detail acceptable user details for pupils and staff)  
First Aid and Medication  
Health and Safety



Keeping Children Safe in Education  
Safety  
Lettings/Hirers agreement  
Offsite Visits  
SEND Local Offer  
Safer Recruitment and staff HR policies  
Safer Working Practice  
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)  
Staff Behaviour - Code of Conduct and Teaching Standards  
Whistle Blowing  
Working Together to Safeguard Children

This policy was reviewed in January 2024.  
It will be reviewed in January 2025.