

Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy

Review Date	September 2024	Next Review by Date	September 2025
Reviewed By	Headteacher		
Approved by Governing Body	November 2024		

Rationale

The school's duty to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) arises from the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Specific information is found in the DfE guidance '[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)'. Additional guidance which informs the school's approach includes:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2022
- Working together to safeguard children
- The Equality Act 2010
- Preventing and tackling bullying
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges
- Promoting fundamental British values
- The PSHE Association Curriculum and Resources guidance

For the purposes of this policy, the subject is referred to throughout as 'Relationships and Sex Education' (RSE).

This Policy covers both primary and secondary phases. We consider all of our pupils to be vulnerable because of their Special Educational Needs. Due to the additional needs of the pupils, particular consideration is required to their age and stage to address specific issues of concern. Whilst teachers have a clear responsibility to educate, this needs to be in effective partnership with parents. Definitive advice from DfE has been published here, and this policy seeks to follow that as appropriate.

Aim

Effective relationship and sex education (RSE) is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives.

- To inform teachers, pupils, parents and carers on how we seek to provide RSE within our school in order give knowledge and protect them both in the present and the future.
- Pathways Education wants to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are pupils at the school, in order to help young people through their physical, emotional and moral development.

RSE is not delivered in isolation, but rooted within our PSHEE framework and embedded across many other areas of our curriculum and school life. This policy was produced by the Headteacher and school team. During our consultation in its development, we have sought views of staff, link governor, the pupils and their parents. In addition, we are undertaking a review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils. This Policy will be made available to Parents and Prospective parents through our school website and a hard copy made available on demand through the school office. Currently, we do not believe we have non-English speakers in our audience.

What is Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)?

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity – this would be inappropriate teaching.

Curriculum

The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSE programme aims to prepare pupils for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships.

Primary Phase

All children will have an education that covers Health and Relationships. The focus in Key Stage 2 is on 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. The children will be taught:

- How to take turns
- How to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect
- The importance of honesty and truthfulness
- Permission seeking and giving and the concept of personal privacy
- Establishing personal space and boundaries
- The differences between appropriate and inappropriate unsafe physical and other, contact – these are the introduction of teaching about consent, which will be built upon further when our pupils move further up the school.
- The principles of positive relationships also apply online as, most of our children will be using the internet.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of our children and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for our children. Families include: adoptive parents, families headed by grandparents, foster parents/carers among other structures, single parent families, LGBTQ parents among structures.

In KS2, the subject is generally known as 'PSHE' - At this level, Sex Education is not statutory, although the DfE recommends that certain aspects are embraced, including the changes at puberty and the understanding of how babies are conceived and born. The two elements above, and any other aspects of sex education, are included in the school's scheme of work for RSE. When considered across this educational age range, Relationship education involves learning at an age/stage-appropriate level, this includes learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, consent, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It involves both sharing information and exploring issues and values in an objective environment which promotes respect, tolerance and understanding. A comprehensive RSE curriculum supports life skills needed to make healthy choices. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

The RSE curriculum is delivered in KS2 and transition classes, through our PSHE programme where the scheme of work is specifically mapped out. This is adapted by the teaching staff to the stage of their class.

Secondary Phase

All elements are taught and included within the PSHE scheme and mapped out for KS3, supplemented as appropriately across other areas of the curriculum. Learning covers:

- Importance of values and moral considerations
- Value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- Value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- Managing emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Making choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- How to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- Understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and – the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy

Organisation and Content

Much of our RSE takes place within PSHEE lessons. The curriculum is taught within twice weekly discrete PSHEE lesson and further embedded in through Project or SEMH-based lessons and by staff during the day.

RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHEE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included through Science lessons. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some pupils will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson, sometimes through the use of distancing techniques such as the use of a question box (based outside the classroom). When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the pupils, the question may be dealt with individually at another time. Teachers are trained in RSE so that they are fully competent in delivering PSHE lessons. Advice can be sought through more expert or specialist teachers through local schools for those who are uncomfortable with teaching certain aspects of the curriculum. Support is offered from the leadership team who will help with planning or delivery lessons if required.

Inclusion

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

All of the pupils at Pathways Education have additional needs and we offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary. We recognise that pupils with SEND may need more help than others in coping with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up; they may also need more help in learning what sorts of behaviour are and are not acceptable. We

understand that certain aspects of SEND may make a pupil more vulnerable to abuse and, in this context, take care to ensure that, in a manner commensurate with their understanding, pupils are warned about abuse and develop their resilience against it.

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that RSE is relevant to them.

Right of withdrawal of pupils from RSE

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of RSE; parents can identify when RSE is being covered by referring to the Curriculum Overviews which are published on the school website. Requests for withdrawal should be put into writing and addressed to the Headteacher; a copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's education record on the School Management System. However, withdrawal from RSE rarely happens, by working in partnership with parents they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education. Any such request will be treated sensitively. It will result in an invitation for the parent(s) to attend a meeting with the Deputy Headteacher, who will listen to the parents' concerns and explain the school's approach and its statutory obligations. It is hoped that, in this way:

- (i) reassurance will be provided, and parents' anxieties can be alleviated,
- (ii) the school can, if necessary, make adjustments to its programme and
- (iii) an agreement can be reached which enables the child to attend the lesson(s)

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents or headteacher of any disclosure unless the headteacher has specifically requested them to do so. In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- Child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the school's procedures.
- In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.
- The school will take all reasonable steps to encourage the young person to talk to their parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice.
- The young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual pupil, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's policies.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and meet on a regular basis. We will ensure that staff receive up to date training on all issues such as female genital mutilation (FGM) and the Prevent duty. Teachers will be trained to teach awareness among children of the dangers of being online and how to protect themselves on social media. We ensure that we have a holistic whole-school approach to teaching RSE and provide relevant and informative training for all staff. We prepare staff for the implications of any new legislation, such as teaching students how to recognise and give consent and ensuring student safety online.

Monitoring and Evaluation of RSE

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Headteacher to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHEE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The next formal review will take place prior to September 2023, in time to include the outcomes of parental and pupil consultations.

Appendix 1 – Letter to parents

Dear Parents and Carers,

As a part of your child's education at Pathways Education, we promote personal wellbeing and development through a comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme. PSHE education is the curriculum subject that gives young people the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills to live safe, healthy, productive lives and meet their full potential. I am writing to let you know that, over the term, starting **dates** your child's class will be taking part in lessons which will focus on the relationships and sex education (RSE) aspect of this programme. RSE lessons will include teaching about: Healthy relationships, including friendships and intimate relationships; families; growing and changing, including puberty; personal hygiene; changing feelings; becoming more independent; keeping safe and consent; developing self-esteem and confidence. Pupils will also have opportunities to ask questions that help prepare them for relationships of all kinds in the modern world.

PSHE education is taught throughout the school and is monitored and reviewed regularly by the staff and governing body. **Please visit the school's website: (insert link to curriculum information here) for more detail about our PSHE curriculum.** All PSHE teaching takes place will take place in a safe learning environment and is underpinned by our school ethos and values.

As a school community, we are committed to working in partnership with parents. If you would like to find out more or discuss any concerns, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,

The Pathways Team

Appendix 2 – Parent Form: Withdrawal from Sex Education

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS	
Name of child:	
Name of parent:	
Date:	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education: (Please consider discussing your concerns with staff in school as we may be able to adapt what/how we deliver information to your child or amend when this is taught)	
Any other information you would like the school to consider:	
Parent name and date:	
Parent signature:	
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parent	
Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken	

