

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

May 2024. Review date: May 2025.

At Sheredes Primary School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) enhances and is enhanced by learning related to anti-bullying, keeping safe on and offline, keeping physically and mentally healthy, and learning about drugs, alcohol and tobacco. RSE also supports the development of skills and attributes such as communication skills, managing peer pressure, risk management, resilience and decision making.

Statutory requirements

The Department for Education introduced compulsory Relationships Education for primary pupils and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for secondary pupils in September 2020. Also, since September 2020 it has been compulsory for all schools to teach Health Education. Our Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship (PSHE&C) and science schemes of work elaborate on how we teach relationships and sex education and health education. Through these subjects, we want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe – we want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society.

We have committed to retain our current choice to continue to teach age-appropriate sex education alongside relationships education.

Definition

RSE is part of lifelong learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. RSE aims to give children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitive relationships and the skills to stay safe both on and offline. It enables pupils to explore their own and other's attitudes and values and builds their self-esteem and confidence to view their own sexuality positively.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Aims

The aims of RSE complement those of PSHE&C, and are to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils
- Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- Encourage pupils to value themselves and others
- Allow pupils to acknowledge and appreciate difference and diversity
- Teach pupils how to make informed choices
- Prepare pupils to be positive and active members of a democratic society
- Teach pupils to understand what constitutes a safe and healthy lifestyle
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Promote safety in forming and maintaining relationships
- Provide pupils with a toolkit for understanding and managing their emotions

- Provide pupils with the opportunities to consider issues which may affect their own lives and/or the lives of others
- Help pupils to identify the characteristics of healthy relationships, how relationships may affect mental and physical health; and how to stay safe online
- 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

Delivery of RSE

At Sheredes Primary, we believe that pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. Our teaching of RSE is designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships.

We have developed our own PSHE&C scheme of work. *See PSHE&C policy and scheme of work.* In Year 1 through to Year 6, RSE is taught through the PSHE&C scheme of work. Some biological aspects of sex education are taught through the science scheme of work. In Nursery and Reception sex and relationship education is provided through following the early learning goals and teaching PSED.

In Year Six, a programme of work is followed in the Summer term that allows for the children to discuss questions in single and mixed sex groups. Knowledge and understanding of a long-term loving relationship, and changes in puberty are taught through use of video material and discussions.

- **Puberty and Menstruation**

This area of RSE is delivered in the Summer term of Year 6. The work is delivered through discussions based on BBC Sex Education. Opportunities are given for the children to formulate their own questions to be answered in whole class, single sex groups or individual situations – depending on the needs of the children.

- **Contraception, HIV and Sexually transmitted diseases, abortion.**

If children ask about these during the course of sex and relationship lessons within the PSHE &C curriculum teachers refer the children back to their parents.

When discussing issues related to RSE, pupils are expected to treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Ground Rules

- No one has to answer a personal question
- Personal questions specifically aimed at embarrassing others are discouraged
- No one is forced to participate in a discussion
- Only correct names for body parts are used, if slang words are mentioned they are explained
- Meanings of words are explained clearly and factually
- Respect for differences between pupils is maintained

Responding to unwelcome questions or comments

- If a question is too personal, the teacher can offer to respond privately, remind the children of ground rules or refer the pupil to an appropriate colleague, parent, or school nurse.

- If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, this should be acknowledged and the correct answer provided in a later lesson as appropriate.
- If a question is too explicit, the teacher makes this clear and refers children to their parents.
- If a question raises concern about a child's safety, child protection procedures need to be followed.
- Pupils need to be clear about the procedures that follow a disclosure. Remember, not to promise confidentiality in this situation.

We believe that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships, and different types of families, in the context of the law.

Pupils with SEND

Pupils with special educational needs should follow the same RSE education programme as all other pupils. Careful consideration is given concerning the level of differentiation needed, and in some cases the content or delivery may have to be adapted. Teachers and/or learning support assistants work with individual pupils where required, and if appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body 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 components of RSE.

Staff

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.

How will sensitive issues be managed at Sheredes?

Delivering a sex and relationship education involves the possibility of covering issues that are likely to be sensitive or controversial such as: sex education, family lifestyles and values. At Sheredes, we believe it is important that teachers' beliefs and attitudes should not influence the teaching of RSE within the PSHE &C framework.

Parents' right to withdraw

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's relationships and sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective we:

- Make available online, via the school's website this RSE policy
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE education of their child
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school
- Inform parents about the best practice known with regard to RSE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home.

We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities.

We have committed to retain parents' **right to withdraw** their child from sex education within RSE (other than sex education in the National Curriculum as part of science). There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary school as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from the sex education elements of RSE, they should discuss this with the headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in.

Parents should be aware that schools are legally required to provide a broad, balanced curriculum. Sex education topics can arise incidentally and overlap with relationships education lessons and it is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from these lessons.

Training

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

Assessment, Monitoring and Reporting.

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE&C subject leaders through talking to children, observations and learning walks, work scrutiny, feedback from staff.

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

RSE is reported on as part of the Annual Report to parents.

This policy is annually reviewed and is used as a basis for identifying where the school is and where it wants to be with RSE. This informs the yearly school improvement plan.