

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

This policy was reviewed in January 2025 by Beth Barber (PSHE Subject Leader at Shakespeare Junior School).

Intent

The Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Although sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, the Department for Education (DfE) recommends that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of its pupils. It states that sex education should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) supports pupils to develop healthy relationships in various contexts, and to know when to seek help. Learning about relationships and sex supports children and young people to stay safe, enjoy positive relationships of all kinds, and make informed decisions.

Teaching and Learning

At Shakespeare Junior School, Relationships Education is taught in all year groups as part of the PSHE (Personal Social Health & Economic) curriculum, which has its own policy. PSHE lessons are delivered by class teachers once a week. Shakespeare Junior School teaches some aspects of sex education to pupils in Year 6 as part of RSE and the wider PSHE curriculum. RSE lessons are delivered by class teachers during the summer term.

Relationships Education

By the end of their time at primary school, pupils will have learnt about:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know:

- 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

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.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know:

- 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

Pupils should know:

- 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
- 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

Pupils should know:

- 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

Pupils should know:

- 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, for example family, school or other sources

When teaching relationships content, teachers will address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teaching about families will be delivered in a sensitive and well-judged manner based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances and an understanding that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. Care will be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs.

All teaching materials used at Shakespeare Junior School align with the statutory guidance, are age-appropriate and meet the curriculum objective they are intended for. A lot of the resources used are quality-assured by the PSHE Association, which is the national body for PSHE education.

Relationships and Sex Education (Year 6)

Medway Public Health Directorate has worked in close partnership with the PSHE Association to produce a quality assured suite of RSE lesson plans and resources which are used for teaching RSE at Shakespeare Junior School. The school will provide an opportunity for parents to discuss what their children will be learning about in Year 6 RSE lessons and view resource materials if they would like to.

The Year 6 RSE lessons enable pupils to extend their thinking about puberty (introduced in Year 5) and the concept of change throughout our lives. Lessons will explore some of the feelings associated with change and consider changes that might occur alongside puberty, including moving to secondary school and the new roles and responsibilities that might accompany this.

Increasing pupils' understanding of what is meant by a positive, healthy and loving relationship is an important part of safeguarding their health and wellbeing. Lessons look at different kinds of relationships, and the values, expectations and responsibilities within healthy, positive relationships. They also help pupils to understand that relationships can change over time and explore some ways that changing relationships can be managed—ensuring behaviour is respectful, even when things do change.

Understanding what is meant by sex is an important foundation for the RSE pupils will receive at secondary school. Lessons at Shakespeare Junior School emphasise that having sexual intercourse or the decision to have a baby, is something for when pupils are much older. They also emphasise the importance of consent in this context. They enable pupils to reflect on values and responsibilities within healthy adult relationships, and are therefore set clearly within RSE — as part of the wider PSHE education curriculum.

Pupils learn:

- about adult relationships and the human life cycle
- about human reproduction (how a baby is made and how it grows)

Pupils will be able to:

- identify the links between love, committed relationships / marriage, and conception
- explain what sexual intercourse is, and explain that this may be one part of an intimate relationship between consenting adults
- explain what pregnancy means, how long it lasts, and where it occurs, i.e. that a baby is made when a sperm (male) meets an egg /ovum (female) and then the fertilised egg settles into the lining of the uterus (or womb) (female)

During lessons, pupils will discuss and sort facts and myths about puberty and pregnancy; create mind maps and guidance leaflets; engage with relationship stories and scenarios; watch BBC videos and explore children's literature, such as '*Let's talk about where babies come from*' by Robbie H Harris. There will be plenty of opportunities for pupils to ask questions (anonymously when appropriate).

Inclusion

All teaching and learning will be inclusive, avoid heteronormative assumptions, and meet the needs of all learners—including those with special educational needs and disabilities (and will be sensitive to the religious and cultural identity of pupils).

Teachers will ensure that the content, approach and use of inclusive language reflect the diversity of the school community and society more widely—helping every pupil to feel valued and included in the classroom.

Right of Withdrawal of Pupils from Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

Parents cannot withdraw their children from the statutory relationships education because it is important that all children receive this content, which covers topics such as friendships and how to stay safe. However, some parents may prefer to take responsibility for teaching certain aspects of this education and they have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education lessons, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. in Science lessons). The school would make alternative arrangements in such cases. Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with teachers and the Headteacher at the earliest opportunity and are welcome to review any PSHE/ RSE resources the school uses.

Confidentiality

It should be made clear to pupils that all adults in school cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality and this should be made clear when forming the class ground rules. During PSHE and RSE lessons, children may disclose something to an adult or another child which gives the teacher cause for concern. On this occasion, the school's 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' or the Deputy will be informed and, if appropriate, the parents.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher and Leadership Team to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

The Governing Body is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the RSE Policy.

Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This includes evaluating and commenting on the school's RSE policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery.

This policy will be reviewed by January 2026 to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents at Shakespeare Junior School, and that it is in line with current DfE advice and guidance.