



## **Relationships and Sex Education policy**

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### **1. Aims**

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at Alverstone Infant School are to:

- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

## **2. Statutory requirements**

This policy sets out our school's approach to statutory Relationships Education. We have based our school's relationships and sex education policy on the statutory guidance document "Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education" (DfE, 2019). Department for Education guidance states that from September 2020, all primary schools must teach Relationships and Health Education. In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Within this policy, as in the DfE guidance, Relationships Education is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. Our definition of Relationships Education includes all of those elements defined within this statutory topic – these are detailed below in the 'RSE Curriculum' section. Sex Education is defined as teaching children how human reproduction occurs, including how a baby is conceived. This draws on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science. For the purposes of this policy, we specifically identify any non-statutory Sex Education that falls outside of Science and those related elements (the physical changes associated with puberty) within statutory Health Education.

## **3. Policy development**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – the headteacher and a governor pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to view the policy and to submit any views or written responses
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

## **4. Roles and responsibilities**

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) forms part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum in our school. The RSE programme is led by our PSHE leader and headteacher.

RSE lessons are taught by class teachers and are supported by the PSHE leader, who leads training for all 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

The governing body are responsible for approving the RSE policy, and holding the headteacher to account for its implementation. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE and any staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

We recognise the importance of appropriate staff training to enable staff to deliver effective RSE. The PSHE co-ordinator will access courses or INSET opportunities to assist staff involved in the delivery of RSE in accordance with the School Improvement Plan.

As a school we are aware that the primary responsibility for providing children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We recognise the need to work with parents and carers to ensure a shared understanding of RSE and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of our pupils.

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

## **5. Statutory Relationships Education**

As part of our PSHE/Relationships Education programme of study, children will be taught what a relationship is; the different types of relationships they might have e.g. with family members, friends, and other adults; the importance of healthy and secure relationships to wellbeing; what constitutes a healthy relationship, in person and online; how to set and observe appropriate boundaries in relationships; how to recognise when a situation is unsafe; strategies for dealing with situations that they find uncomfortable or that are unsafe; and sources of help and advice. A summary of the key objectives of the statutory Relationships Education curriculum is set out in Appendix 1

## **6. Curriculum and delivery**

All elements of our Relationships & Sex Education programme will be delivered in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner as part of our regular timetabled PSHE lessons, using the SCARF programme. RSE is delivered predominantly by class teachers in class groups. Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in school, for example the school nurse. All visitors will be familiar with and understand the school's RSE policy and be expected to work within it. We believe that parents are vital in supporting this part of our curriculum, so we will always let them know in advance when sensitive topics are being taught and will share content and resources.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner to give them accurate information appropriate to their age and maturity.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in RE (religious education).

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

For more information about our RSE curriculum overview, see Appendix 1

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

## **7. Teaching and learning strategies**

We aim to provide an environment and atmosphere for RSE where pupils feel safe, relaxed, unintimidated, and focused; and where they have confidence and trust in the knowledge, ability and skills of staff in school. This ensures that both pupils and staff feel fully confident in engaging in age appropriate discussions around potentially sensitive topics and themes.

To provide clarity and create a safe learning environment, at the beginning of each session, a set of ground rules will be agreed by the class based on a school-wide template. As a minimum, ground rules are likely to include the following basic guideline, in line with our school values:

- Listen politely to each other.
- Everyone gets a turn - if they want one.
- Respect everybody's contribution.
- No personal information - no names.
- No personal questions.
- No making fun.
- An age-appropriate rule around confidentiality and safeguarding

Children and teachers are free to suggest and agree further ground rules as appropriate to the topic of each lesson. Other teaching and learning strategies utilised in RSE (and across the PSHE curriculum) to establish a safe learning environment include the following techniques:

- Using 'distancing' techniques such as role play, case studies, videos etc. to depersonalise sensitive issues.
- Anonymous question boxes. These can help children to have the confidence to ask sensitive questions, and they provide an opportunity for teachers to pre-empt questions that might not be age appropriate or that might raise safeguarding or child protection concerns.
  - It will be emphasised to children that any voluntary sharing of information should be anonymous (for example "someone I know..." rather than "I" or naming names). Should personal questions be asked of either children or staff, children will be reminded that the ground rules for RSE prohibit personal questions. Although staff may draw on their personal experiences to answer certain questions, for example around families, this should always be depersonalised and discussed in third person rather than first person. All staff teaching RSE will be supported and advised by the PSHE lead and senior leadership team on these matters as required.

## **8. Monitoring arrangements**

Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we regularly review the RSE curriculum to evaluate its effectiveness and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy or curriculum as required.

Teachers will continually reflect on the effectiveness of our PSHE provision, and the PSHE Coordinator will gather staff views through regular Staff Voice feedback. Pupil Voice exercises will also be used to inform reviews and updates to planning, resources and activities. The Governing body monitors our RSE policy on a regular basis. The Governing body gives consideration to any feedback from parents about the RSE programme and makes a record of all such comments.

## **9. Managing Difficult Questions**

During both formal and informal PSHE/RSE sessions, pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Any questions from pupils are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned, and if the teacher delivering the session deems it appropriate to answer.

Teachers will:

- use specific ground rules for this work which will clarify boundaries for children/young people, and mitigate disclosures in class
- clarify that personal questions should not be asked
- clarify that pupils should not give out personal information in class but speak to someone they trust after the lesson, e.g. school nurse, teacher, pastoral staff. In some lessons, an anonymous question box may be used to allow children to ask questions about potentially sensitive or embarrassing topics.

Teaching staff will endeavour to answer questions as openly as possible but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, or that is not age-appropriate (or within the school's RSE policy), provision may be made to address the individual child/young person's requirements.

The school believes that individual teachers must use their professional skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned about any question from a safeguarding perspective. If a teacher does not know the answer to a question or if a question is felt to be inappropriate, this should be acknowledged and, if considered necessary, this may be followed up outside of the classroom environment with individual pupils. Children may also be signposted back to parents/carers who have ultimate responsibility in talking to their children about sensitive matters. We will also encourage parents to talk with school if they have any questions or queries, and if they would like advice on how to better support their child and continue learning outside of the classroom.

## **10. Recording and Assessment**

Pupils will have the opportunity to reflect on their learning within lessons and at the end of each unit. In addition to the pupils' self-assessment, teachers will assess through informal methods, such as observations and class or group discussions. Observations may have a particular focus; e.g. children's listening skills, empathy etc. Quizzes may be used before and after a unit of work to aid assessment. Elements of RSE that occur in the Science curriculum will be assessed through recorded work to establish age related expectations of knowledge and understanding.

## **11. Resources**

We use the SCARF scheme for RSE. This is a comprehensive scheme of planning and resources, which is periodically updated to ensure it remains relevant and engaging to children and meets all statutory requirements of RSE. Class teachers review the planning and resources for each lesson to ensure they are fully relevant and accessible to the needs of children in their classes and tailor them if necessary. Additional resources are also planned in to our wider scheme of PSHE.

## **12. Safeguarding**

In providing children with an understanding of healthy relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider RSE to be an important part of our school's approach to safeguarding. Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Teachers will take these matters seriously and speak to the child away from the class as a matter of priority. Teachers will draw their concerns to the attention of the designated safeguarding leads who will deal with it in line with our Safeguarding Policy. We occasionally engage the expertise of other appropriate external partners to work with us to provide advice and support to children with regard to RSE and Health Education. Such visits should be arranged through the PSHE Lead and with the approval of senior leaders. These sessions are in addition to, and intended to complement, our existing RSE provision. Where external partners are involved, teachers will have discussed and shared the planning and content of the sessions with visitors in advance. A class teacher will always be present and responsible for classroom management. Visitors supporting the delivery of RSE will follow the agreed ground rules and the protocols set out above regarding any safeguarding or child protection concerns.

## **13. Inclusivity and Special Educational Needs**

Our pupils have different needs based on their emotional and physical development, life experiences, and learning differences, but we aim to ensure that all pupils are properly included in RSE. Teachers will plan and deliver work in a variety of ways, in order to meet the needs of individual pupils with SEN or learning differences. We focus on activities that increase a pupil's assertiveness, communication and relationship skills, their self-esteem and understanding.

### **Equalities and diversity**

Schools, like all public institutions, have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. Planning and resources are reviewed to ensure they comply with equalities legislation and the school's equal opportunities policy. All RSE is taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities such as those contained within the Equality Act (2010). Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions. The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSE will not influence the teaching of the subject in school. In our school we seek to recognise and embrace the diverse nature of our community. We aim to value and celebrate religious, ethnic and cultural diversity as part of modern Britain. We will explore different cultural beliefs and values and encourage activities that challenge stereotypes and discrimination and present children with accurate information based on the law. We will use a range of teaching materials and resources that reflect the diversity of our community and encourage a sense of inclusiveness. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

## **14. The role of parents/parental rights to withdrawal**

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary providers of RSE for their children. Our RSE curriculum is designed to support and complement this. We aim to build a positive and supportive relationship with parents and carers through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

In promoting this we will:

- Inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice;
- Provide opportunities to view videos, lesson plans and resources used in the RSE programme;
- Answer any questions that parents may have about RSE for their child;

- Take seriously any issues or concerns that parents raise.

We believe that all of the content within our school's PSHE curriculum, including RSE, is of the utmost importance and relevance to all pupils. However, parents have the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all non-statutory sex education other than that which is part of the National Curriculum for Science. Please note there is no parental right of withdrawal from Relationships Education or Health Education content within the school curriculum, or from any statutory sex education that forms part of the National Curriculum for Science. These are statutory requirements which the DfE mandates schools to teach; please see the statutory document if further information is required. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

We will inform parents of the right to withdraw by letter in advance of non-statutory sex education lessons being taught. Parents and carers who wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education should talk with the class teacher, the PSHE coordinator or the head teacher who will explore any concerns and discuss resources being used. If parents still wish to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education lessons, this request will be recorded, and suitable alternative arrangements made for pupils during relevant lessons. The issue of withdrawal will be handled as sensitively as possible. Parents should also understand that the decision to remove their child from these lessons means that they themselves will assume responsibility for talking to their children about any related sex education themes covered outside of National Curriculum Science.

**Approved by the Governing body**

**Date of this review : 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023**

**Date of next review: Summer 2026**

## Appendix 1: Curriculum overview

### Relationships and sex education curriculum map

YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Year R	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My family (naming family members)</li> <li>• Saying please and thank you.</li> <li>• Naming some feelings (for example through interpreting facial expressions)</li> </ul>	Stories about families Photos of children's own families Feelings photos (SEAL CD)
	Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your family (families are different) – include images of different families single parent families, same sex families, mixed heritage families</li> <li>• Who are your friends? Know everyone's name.</li> <li>• Express some of your own positive qualities.</li> </ul>	Pictures of different families Stories about friends Photo cards of children in the class
	Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play well with friends – take turns.</li> <li>• Know about adults who can help us.</li> </ul>	Turn taking games Pictures and film of people who help us.
Year 1	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do families do together?</li> <li>• Know that there are different types of family – same sex parents, adopted children, single parents</li> <li>• Name a wider range of feelings – BBC clips – PSHE-feelings</li> <li>• Friends – getting on and falling out –its normal to have ups and downs</li> </ul>	Stories featuring different types of families BBC clips – film about feelings Stories about friendships
	Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families may not live in the same house but will still love and care for each other.</li> <li>• Good manners</li> <li>• Responding appropriately to people you don't know</li> </ul>	Stories about separated parents



YEAR GROUP	TERM	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
	Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends – being a good friend</li> <li>• Rules for keeping safe online</li> <li>• Hygiene -children can explain ways of keeping clean and they can name the main parts of the body.</li> <li>• They can explain that people grow from young to old.</li> </ul>	Photo resources of people of different ages.
Year 2	Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Families are different (at a more sophisticated level) – two people can love each other and may or not be same sex, may or may not be married etc.</li> <li>• Resolving arguments with friends</li> <li>• Good manners in a range of situations</li> <li>• Name a more nuanced range of feelings</li> </ul>	Stories Images of different families
	Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loyalty to your own family – what does this look like?</li> <li>• How to make sure no one feels left out of friendships</li> <li>• Respecting others</li> </ul>	P4C discussions Anti bullying materials
	Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to judge when a friendship is making you feel unhappy or uncomfortable</li> <li>• Right to privacy</li> </ul>	NSPCC materials

## Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong</li> <li>• How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed</li> </ul>
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends</li> <li>• The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties</li> <li>• That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>• The conventions of courtesy and manners</li> <li>• The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive</li> <li>• The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults</li> </ul>
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them</li> <li>• How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met</li> <li>• How information and data is shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact</li> <li>• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know</li> <li>• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult</li> <li>• How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard</li> <li>• How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so</li> <li>• Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources</li> </ul>

