



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

September 2025 (Review: September 2026)

Intent

At Parklands, we see Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as an important element of Health and Well-being Education (Personal, Social and Health Education - PSHE) which enables children to understand and cope with both physical and emotional changes. High quality RSE helps to create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. We are required to teach Relationships Education as part of our PSHE curriculum. Current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) state that from September 2020, all schools must deliver Relationships Education.

What are Relationships and Sex Education?

Effective relationships and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. The objective of relationship and sex education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. It will help them to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Impact

Why is RSE in schools important?

High quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships.
- Older pupils frequently say that sex and relationships education was 'too little, too late and too biological'. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 'Not Yet Good Enough Report'.
- RSE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding requirements. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risks in relationships.

Objectives of RSE at Parklands

Through the provision outlined in this policy, the school's overall aims of RSE are to teach and develop the following three main elements:

Attitudes and values:

- * learn the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- * learn the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- * learn the value of respect, love and care
- * explore, consider and understand moral dilemmas
- * develop critical thinking as part of decision-making
- * develop a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice, bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships;

Personal and social skills:

- * learn to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- * develop self-respect and empathy for others
- * learn to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- * develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- * manage conflict
- * learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

Knowledge and understanding:

- * learn and understand physical development at appropriate stages
- * understand human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships

Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfE

In addition to this, we also aim to:

- * teach pupils to challenge body image and stereotypes, particularly in the media
- * help children to respect and care for their bodies
- * raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence
- * encourage children to value themselves and others
- * develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media
- * provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- * teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender identity, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them
- * support pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teaching them to care for, and respect, their bodies
- * provide pupils with the right tools to enable them to seek information or support, should they need it
- * teach pupils about consent and their right to say no, in an age appropriate manner

- * create a positive culture around the issues of sexuality, confidence and empathy
- * enable children to develop the vocabulary needed to articulate clearly, their thoughts and feelings with confidence
- * help pupils identify the characteristics of healthy relationships; how relationships may affect mental and physical health; and how to stay safe online
- * to teach lessons that are sensitive to a range of views, values and beliefs
- * ensure that staff teaching RSE remain neutral in their delivery whilst ensuring that pupils always have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals

The aim of RSE is NOT to:

- * encourage pupils to become sexually active at a young age
- * promote a particular sexual orientation or gender identity
- * sexualise children

The principles of high quality RSE in our school

Relationships and Sex Education:

- * is a partnership between home and school
- * ensures pupils' views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
- * starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
- * is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
- * includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
- * has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- * helps pupils understand on and offline safety, consent, violence and exploitation
- * is both medically and factually correct
- * is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, special educational needs and disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- * is well planned, assessed and evaluated
- * helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society which may differ from their own
- * promotes equality in relationships, recognises and challenges gender inequality and reflects girls' and boys' different experiences and needs

The wider context of RSE

The school's RSE programme will:

- * be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life
- * be an entitlement for all pupils, including those with additional learning and language needs
- * be set within the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness
- * recognise that family is a broad concept; not just one model

- * encourage pupils and teachers to share and respect each other's views with cultural awareness and sensitivity
- * ensure pupils are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure
- * recognise that parents / carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up
- * work in partnership with parents / carers and pupils, consulting them about the content of programme
- * work in partnership with other health professionals and the wider community

A good understanding of pupils' faith backgrounds and positive relationships between the school and local faith communities help to create a constructive context for the teaching of these subjects. In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of all pupils must be taken into account when planning, so that topics included in the core content of this guidance are appropriately handled. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics. All schools may teach about faith perspectives. In particular, schools with a religious character may teach the distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious. For example, the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex. In all schools, teaching should reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

DfE Statutory Guidance 2019

Implementation

We teach RSE through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main RSE teaching in our PSHE curriculum, we also teach some RSE through other subject areas (for example Science and PE) where we feel it contributes to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her body, and how it is changing and developing. All schools must teach the following as part of the National Curriculum for Science. [Non-statutory guidance shown in brackets.]

Key Stage 1 National Curriculum Science:

- Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense.
- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.
- Describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene.
- [They should also be introduced to the process of reproduction and growth in animals.]
- [The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to understand how reproduction occurs.]

Key Stage 2 National Curriculum Science:

- Describe the difference in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird.
- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.
- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age.
- [Pupils should find out about the different types of reproduction including sexual and asexual reproduction in plants, and sexual reproduction in animals.]
- [Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.]
- [Pupils should continue to learn about the importance of nutrition and should be introduced to the main body parts associated with the skeleton and muscles, finding out how different parts of the body have special functions.]
- [Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.]

Our RSE curriculum is clearly mapped out to ensure that sensitive topics are taught in an age-appropriate way with clear progression. The information below outlines the topics taught by the end of each phase.

Statutory aspects of Relationships Education:

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.

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, trust, loyalty, kindness, generosity, shared 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 themselves (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

- 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

Statutory Aspects of Health Education (which apply to RSE)

Health and prevention

- about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.

Changing adolescent body

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

The RSE and health education is taught using the 'You, Me and PSHE' scheme of work (SOW). By using this programme, we aim to ensure that we equip our children with essential skills to navigate their way through life at, and beyond Parklands Primary School. Following the SOW, we have chosen, we intend to develop the whole child through carefully planned and resourced lessons that develop the knowledge, skills and attributes children need to protect themselves and enhance their wellbeing. Where appropriate, we may use visitors from external agencies to support RSE. By working alongside external organisations, we can enhance the delivery of RSE, using specialist knowledge, which provides different ways of engaging with pupils. Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of SEND children for them to have full access to the content of RSE.

We have a clear duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that our teaching is accessible to all pupils, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or + (LGBT+). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice, including homophobia, and promote understanding and respect, enabling us to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010. We will deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation and identity, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity, need to feel that RSE is relevant to them. Teachers will never assume that all intimate relationships are between opposite sexes. Information will be inclusive and will include LGBT+ people in stories, scenarios, and role-plays. We will ensure all pupils can explore topics from a different gender's point of view, and a variety of activities, including practical tasks, discussions, group activities and competitions. We will also ensure that our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content.

The role of parents and other professionals

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

- inform parents about the RSE policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents may have about RSE;
- take seriously any issues that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school;
- seek the views of parents and encourage them to be involved in reviewing the RSE policy;
- inform parents about the best practice known about 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.

Advising Parents/Carers

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. The DfE has produced a guide for parents about RSE (this has been given to parents and is on the school website).

The school will:

- * work closely with parents / carers when planning and delivering RSE
- * ensure that parents / carers know what will be taught and when, and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the Year 6 sex education delivered as part of RSE.
- * give parents / carers every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of relationships education and RSE
- * communicate and give opportunities for parents / carers to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to help increase confidence in the curriculum
- * build a good relationship with parents / carers on these subjects over time by inviting parents to engage with school to discuss what will be taught, address any concerns and help support them in managing conversations with their children on these issues
- * encourage parents / carers to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through RSE
- * will reach out to all parents, including those who are hard to engage, recognising that a range of approaches may be needed for doing so.

Parents right to withdraw

Parents / carers cannot withdraw their child from the statutory sex education content included in National Curriculum for Science, which includes content on human development, including reproduction. Parents / carers also cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships, how to stay safe and puberty. However, they do have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of Year 6 sex education delivered as part of the non-statutory RSE, delivered as part of the PSHE curriculum.

Parents of pupils in Y6 will be informed in advance of sex and relationships lessons. They will be asked to contact the Head teacher, if they wish to withdraw their child from some or all of the Year 6 sex education. Before granting any such request, the headteacher will discuss this request with the parent / carer and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This process will be documented to ensure a record is kept. The Head teacher will also discuss with the parent / carer the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This will include any social and emotional

effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly advise parents / carers to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. It is acknowledged however, that the final decision on the issue is for the parents / carers to take and the child and family should not be stigmatised for the decision.

We encourage other valued members of the community to work with us to provide advice and support. In particular, members of the Local Health Authority, such as the school nurse and other health professionals, give us valuable support with our sex and relation education programme. We believe that visitors should complement and never substitute or replace planned provision and it is the PSHE Subject Leader and class teachers' responsibility to plan the curriculum and lessons.

Single Sex Groups

Our policy is sensitive to the needs of different groups. The same content will be covered with both boys and girls. However, for some pupils, it may be more appropriate for them to be taught particular topics in single sex groups so as to afford privacy and dignity to female and/or male pupils. We will consult parents/carers and pupils on what is included, and on how it is delivered. This will help pupils and their families to establish what is appropriate and acceptable for them. Working in single sex groups can considerably ease concerns about RSE and help to ensure that pupils receive the RSE to which they are entitled. Single sex groups can also help boys and girls to feel safer and less embarrassed about airing issues and discussing relationships. Where single sex groups are used for pupils, they will always be given time after the sessions to come together in a controlled environment to share and discuss what they have learnt, before leaving the classroom

Preventative curriculum

Schools are seen as having an important role in the delivery of the preventative curriculum; teaching children the knowledge and skills they need to protect themselves from all forms of abuse and understand how to keep themselves safe.

It is suggested that abuse is still underreported by children. This is a problem that is often compounded by barriers to seeking help, including not being listened to or believed by adults or not having the terminology to explain what is happening.

Abuse is one of the very worst things that can ever happen to a child, but it's not always easy to pick up the signs, and often a child might not even know that what's happening is wrong. Our curriculum aims to help teachers, parents and children to address some of these issues. This supports the preventative curriculum and our legal obligation to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils.

At Parklands, we provide children with the skills to recognise abusive behaviour and understand that abusive relationships are never acceptable or right. We support our children by:

- Introducing a whole school ethos that demonstrates that abuse in all its different forms is unacceptable;
- Responding to disclosures and child protection concerns quickly and efficiently;
- Promoting a listening school ethos;
- Offering appropriate support for children and staff dealing with abuse;
- Offering children opportunities to build self-esteem and confidence and to develop respectful relationships;
- Working with outside providers to develop a broad range of curriculum enhancement activities;
- Covering how children can keep safe within the PSHE curriculum;
- Participating in high quality child protection training for all staff;
- Highlighting children's rights.

Responding to disclosures

As a result of the issues raised, a child might disclose that they're suffering from abuse, or are aware of it happening to others. Any disclosure of abuse should be treated as a potential child protection concern, and reported to the designated child protection lead in line with the school's procedures.

When listening to and dealing with disclosures, staff will:

- Actively listen and do not look shocked or disbelieving;
- Stay calm;
- Take what the child is saying seriously;
- Not ask for detail;
- Reassure the child that they are doing the right thing;
- Not promise to keep secrets;
- Tell the child that they will have to share this information;
- Explain what will happen next;
- Record the information as quickly as possible - facts not opinion;
- Sign and date everything they record.

Monitoring and review

Monitoring is the responsibility of the Head teacher, named Governor and Subject Leader with responsibility for RSE. The Pupil Support Committee of the governing body monitors our RSE policy. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the RSE programme, and makes a record of all such comments. The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change if required.

Documents that inform the school's RSE Policy include:

- Education Act (1996)

- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st Century (2014)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers (2019)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education - statutory safeguarding guidance (2019)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Reviewed date - September 2025

Reviewed by - Kate Stacey PSHE Lead

Next review date - September 2026