



Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Policy Statement

Since the then Right Honourable Justine Greening, Secretary of State for Education, announced, on March 1st 2017, that it is her intention to make Relationships Education statutory in Primary schools from September 2019, Sex and Relationship Education has now become better known as RSE – Relationship and Sex Education – to reflect the changes that are to come.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings' (Sex Education Forum, 1999).

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

RSE makes an important contribution to health and well-being by supporting children and young people's ability to learn, achieve and flourish.

"The right to education includes the right to sexual education, which is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realising other human rights, such as the right to health, the right to information and sexual and reproductive rights."

Report to the UN General Assembly - July 2010 | Item 69, paragraph 18

At Holbeton Primary School we believe that effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the knowledge, skills and understanding needed by pupils if they are to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. It is an intrinsic part of the physical, intellectual and emotional growth of an individual. Relationship and sex education is delivered through the PSHE and Citizenship framework and the Science curriculum.

Other related policies and documents include the PSHE & Citizenship Policy, Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policy, Drugs Education Policy, Science curriculum and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Current RSE requirements

Maintained primary and secondary schools are legally obliged to have an up-to-date RSE policy that describes the content and organisation of RSE taught outside science in the National Curriculum. This includes special schools. In primary schools if the decision is taken not to teach RSE beyond the National Curriculum this should also be documented in the policy. The policy should be made available to parents/carers on request. It is the school governors' responsibility to ensure that the policy is developed and implemented. School governors are in law expected to give 'due regard' to the RSE 2000 guidance and to maintain an up to date RSE policy which must be made available to parents/carers. (Learning and Skills Act, 2000).

It is good practice for academies, free schools, colleges and independent schools to have a policy on RSE. All state-funded schools must publish information in relation to each academic year, about the content of the school's curriculum for each subject, and this includes any teaching in personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education and RSE (see 2.5 in the National Curriculum framework (DfE 2013a) and Statutory Instrument 2012 No. 1124).

RSE and statutory duties in school

RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. State-funded schools have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38).

- Sex and Relationships Education (RSE) is an important part of PSHE Education (DfE, 2014).
- When any school provides RSE they must have regard to the [Secretary of State's guidance](#); this is a statutory duty. Academies do not have to provide RSE but must also have regard to Secretary of State's guidance when they do (DfE, 2013). Ofsted will evaluate how schools help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for their children (Ofsted, 2013, Subsidiary Guidance Para 64).
- It is compulsory for all maintained schools to teach the parts of sex education that fall under National Curriculum Science which must be taught to all pupils of primary and secondary age e.g. the biological aspects of puberty and reproduction (Education Act 1996, National Curriculum 2014).

Updated government safeguarding guidance is now available ([Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019](#)) and includes a section about being alert to signs that young girls may be at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). School summer holiday especially during the transition from primary to secondary schools is thought to be a key risk time for FGM. See also the government [Multi-agency practice guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation \(2016\)](#) which includes a section for schools.

RSE has clear links with other school policies aimed at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the:

- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Policy and Safe Internet Use Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

At Holbeton Primary, RSE is delivered through the PSHE SEAL programme and the Science Curriculum. It is enhanced with delivery from visitors such as the NSPCC and School Nurse.

Aims and Objectives.

This policy is a working document which provides guidance and information on all aspects of RSE in the school for staff, parents/carers and governors. To be accessible to all of these groups the document needs to be available on request and presented in a way that is easy to understand.

The role of the headteacher.

It is the responsibility of the headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about the RSE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school RSE programme and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework. The headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE, 2014b).

Schools have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act, 2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2006) (which includes homophobic, sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying) and Section 4.2 of the national curriculum (2014) states "Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment."

Organisation

We teach children about:

- the physical development of their bodies, as they grow into adults;
- how to keep themselves safe
- respect and care for their own bodies
- the importance of self-control
- the way humans reproduce
- the importance of family life
- building positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect
- moral questions and to develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media
- self-esteem and confidence, especially within their relationships with others
- respect for the views of other people, their responsibilities to others
- Sexual and emotional abuse and as part of this the children take part in NSPCC workshops which discuss:
 - How to recognise abuse
 - Different types of abuse at a basic level
 - What to do and how to stay safe

We teach sex education through different aspects of the curriculum. While we carry out the main sex educational teaching in our Science education, we also teach it through other subject areas (for example, PSHE and PE), where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing.

In PSHE we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss relationship issues. We teach about the parts of the body and how these work, and we explain to them what will happen to their bodies during puberty. For example, we tell

the boys that their voices will change during puberty and we explain to the girls about menstruation. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

In Science lessons within the Foundation Stage (Reception class) the children learn about the concept of males and females and about young animals.

In both Key Stage 1 and 2, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for Science.

In Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals (including humans) move, feed, grow and that they reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other.

In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes and the main stages of the human life cycle in greater depth.

In Years 5 and 6, we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women.

We use resources such as the Channel 4 Learning All About Us: Living and Growing Up video and resources to support us with this teaching and always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care.

Withdrawal from RSE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education provided (except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum Science), but do not have the right to withdraw them from Relationship Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RSE Co-ordinator who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Materials will be made available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school RSE programme or who wish to deliver RSE to their children at home.

Working with parents and carers

The government guidance on RSE (DfEE 2000) emphasises the importance of schools working in partnership with parents and carers. Under current legislation schools should enable parents/carers to exercise their right to withdraw their children (until the age of 19) from any school RSE taught outside National Curriculum Science (Education Act 1996). This applies to maintained primary and secondary schools and includes pupils attending a sixth form that is part of a school. It does not apply to sixth form colleges and further education colleges. Parents/carers have a legal right to see the school RSE policy and to be given a copy of it (Education Act 1996). Parents/carers should also be aware that schools are legally required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Sex and relationships topics can arise incidentally in other subjects, such as Science, and it is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions.

Specific Issues within RSE

Language

During all RSE lessons across KS1 and KS2, the correct terms for all body parts and functions will be used. Sex-related slang words will be clarified in a factual way and it is made clear to pupils which words are potentially offensive and that from this point onwards, the correct terms will be used. This aims to prevent bullying of children for not knowing definitions and points out the offensive nature of some words.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

Answering Difficult Questions and Sensitive Issues

Staff members are aware that views around RSE issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion. Both formal and informal RSE Education arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned.

Our school believes that RSE Education should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support. This should be regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

Holbeton Primary believes that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively in line with our Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy.

Pupils' Access to Help and Support

The school displays ChildLine posters, and information about any agencies that support the welfare of children is held in the main office. The School Nurse can offer confidential advice to any child.

Girls who start their periods at school are given confidential advice and support by members of staff. Girls are aware of the provision of sanitary protection which can be obtained from the school office. There is a sanitary bin in the girls' toilets.

Confidentiality and Child Protection/Safeguarding Issues

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named child protection co-ordinator who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All staff members are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.

Useful links for parents:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812593/RSE_primary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf