

Relationships and sex education policy

Portesbery School



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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- › Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- › Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development, the importance of health and hygiene and an understanding of appropriate behaviour (particularly public and private)
- › Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- › Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, including building friendships
- › Teach pupils the correct words to describe themselves and their bodies
- › Ensure that pupils who are able to have the knowledge and strategies to keep themselves safe
- › Support pupils as they become more sexually aware and help them learn to cope with their natural feelings so that they can manage these in a safe, socially-acceptable way
- › Engage parents and carers as co-educators in relationships and sex education so they feel confident to support their child in their learning at home

This area should be approached with an awareness of the values that the school community have agreed in the Feeling Good Policy. Relationship and sex education will be delivered with reference to other school policies ie Equal Opportunities, PSHE, behaviour management, teaching and learning and the Science, PSHE and So Safe schemes of work.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

However, in the Primary Department, we are not required to provide sex education but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

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](#).

At Portesbery School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of staff 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 share their views on the policy and curriculum and how we as a school can support them in this area
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is about personal safety and wellbeing rather than the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendices 1-3 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs, cognitive understanding and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers from inappropriate sources, such as online.

Early Years relationship and sex education will focus on:

- › Pupils learning the correct terms for all parts of their bodies.
- › Pupils starting to develop their understanding of different people and how they relate to them.
- › Pupils starting to develop their understanding of public and private and consent.

Primary department sex education will focus on:

- › Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- › How a baby is conceived and born (as appropriate for the age and developmental stage of each pupil)

Secondary department sex education will focus on:

- › Consolidating pupils' learning from the EYs and Primary Curriculum
- › Continuing to prepare boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings and helping them cope with these changes as they arise.
- › Helping young people to understand the sexual feelings they may start to experience, including how to manage these in a safe and socially-acceptable way.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum maps in Appendices 1-3.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) and So Safe education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

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 (including the rules of appropriate behaviour in different relationships)
- Online safety
- Being safe

The Secondary and Post 16 curriculum will include the above areas and also sex education including:

- Further learning about positive relationships, including intimate and sexual relationships, and sexual health (as appropriate for the age and development stage of each pupil)

We aim to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds and to keep them safe.

As a special school we have pupils with a wide range of differing needs and abilities. In order to ensure that pupils access information and learning that is appropriate to both their age and stage of development/understanding we intend to:

- Focus upon each individual and identify their particular needs and stage of development.
- Build strong and positive relationships with parents that support consistency between home and school.
- Ensure all staff understand how best to teach this subject to meet the needs of individual pupils.
- Recognise learning will occur through both planned and unplanned activities in which the pupils participate, learn and develop.
- Recognise that relationships and sex education will be addressed through spiral learning, revisiting topics at various stages to support pupils to make informed choices.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1-3. 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, LGBTQ+ 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. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The governing board has delegated the approval of this policy to the headteacher.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

7.3 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

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

In general, class teachers will be responsible for delivering RSE to their own classes. The PSED and Life Skills team and Kirsty Hodge (Assistant Headteacher – Secondary) will oversee the curriculum and help to support teachers through advice, guidance and the provision of appropriate resources.

7.4 Pupils

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

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this after discussions with parents and any other relevant parties (social worker, other carers, etc).

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 4 of this policy 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 sex education.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and So Safe (the social safety scheme used throughout the school) as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The school may also invite external agencies, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE or to help deliver sessions as appropriate.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the life skills team and SLT through:

- The progress identified in termly assessments, Annual Reviews and evaluation of planning.
- Learning walks and department planning meetings/reviews.
- Reports to Head Teacher.
- School self-evaluation strategies.
- Governors monitoring arrangements.

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

This policy will be reviewed by a member of the Senior Leadership team every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.

Pupils in the Early Years department will be taught about how to stay safe and healthy in the context of their topics and So Safe curriculum, including learning the correct terms for all parts of their bodies, developing their understanding of different people and how they relate to them and starting to develop their understanding of public and private and consent. (Further details can be provided on request.)

Appendix 1: Pupils in the Primary department or phase 1 of the curriculum will be taught

(At all times we will bear in mind both the ages and developmental stages of the pupils we are working with and tailor the curriculum to meet their needs.)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life – love and kindness, commitment to each other, 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 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 • Who is in their families and the So Safe rules that apply to family members.
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including respect, truthfulness, trust, kindness, sharing, enjoying interests and experiences together and supporting each other 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 (kind voices, kind hands, kind feet rules) • 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 (So Safe) • How to recognise who their friends are and the So Safe rules that apply to friends and other people they know. • The difference between friends and community workers they know (So Safe).

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 and kindness by others, and that in turn they should show respect and kindness to others, including those in positions of authority • About how people might be unkind (physically, verbally, emotionally and online) and how to get help (inc bullying and cyberbullying) • The importance of asking for and giving consent (permission) in relationships with friends, peers and adults • <i>What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive – covered individually as needed.</i>
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • That the same principles and rules apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous (So Safe rules) • <i>How information and data is shared and used online – covered individually as needed.</i>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The different groups of people they may come into contact with and what the rules of interaction are for each different group (So 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 • The proper names for all parts of their bodies, including private parts and the different between private and public body parts and places. • 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

Appendix 2: Pupils in the Secondary department or phase 2 of the curriculum will be taught

(At all times we will bear in mind both the ages and developmental stages of the pupils we are working with and tailor the curriculum to meet their needs.)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit learning from phase 1 as needed. • That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness • What marriage is and why it is an important relationship choice for many couples. • That some couple choose not to get married but can still make a long term commitment to each other. • The importance of consent in all relationships. • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy • : judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships) • : seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit learning from phase 1 as needed. • The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • That everyone is unique and equal [with regard to the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010)]

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revisit learning from phase 1 as needed. • Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reinforcement of all safety aspects covered in the Primary department/phase 1. • The proper names for all parts of their bodies, including private parts and the different between private and public body parts and places. (So Safe) • About private touch and masturbation and the rules around this to keep them safe. (So Safe) • How to stay safe online. • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)
Puberty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes that happen to the bodies of male and female humans during puberty, with the main focus being on their own body. • This will include the growth of pubic hair, emotional changes, periods, erections and wet dreams, private touch/masturbation. • (Links with PSHE learning on Puberty)
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This will addressed with individual pupils if necessary. • For majority of pupils this will be taught in Post 16.

Appendix 3: Pupils in the Post 16 department/phase 3 will also be taught:

(At all times we will bear in mind both the ages and developmental stages of the pupils we are working with and tailor the curriculum to meet their needs.)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, friendship, private touch and possibly sex (for those young people with the capacity to consent). • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in relationships (including sexual relationships), positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the importance of a healthy lifestyle and seeking early help for any issues • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex <p><i>For students for whom this is relevant -</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 4: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.