

POLICY DOCUMENT

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY



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Latest Review	01.05.2024
Next Review	Spring Term 1 2025

Introduction

Hipperholme Grammar School believes that effective Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (collectively termed herein RSE) is essential for young people to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives, to develop resilience, to negotiate its challenges and risks, and to live happy and fulfilling lives.

We ensure that content and teaching is age and developmentally appropriate. Hence the focus in the Junior School on relationships education, and the focus in Senior School on relationships and sex education. We teach RSE in a sensitive and inclusive way, with respect to the backgrounds, faith perspectives and beliefs of pupils and parents.

The school recognises that the role of parents / carers 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 to maturity and to form healthy and respectful relationships. The school's RSE programme is intended to complement and reinforce the role of parents and carers in educating their children about sexuality and relationships.

A key aim of this policy is to help to create a culture of safety, equality and protection. In this respect the policy dovetails with the school's policies on behaviour, bullying and safeguarding.

Scope and application

This Relationships Education and RSE policy applies to both Junior and Senior Schools, including EYFS.

The policy applies to all staff (including employees, fixed term, part-time, temporary and voluntary staff and helpers) and pupils of the School.

Regulatory framework

This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2022;
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfE, 2024);
- Education and Skills Act 2008;
- Education Act 2002;
- Children Act 1989;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education

(England) Regulations 2019.

This policy has regard to the following guidance and advice:

- Statutory DfE guidance: [Relationships education, relationships and sex education and health education](#) (DfE, Sept 2021)
- [Keeping children safe in education](#) (DfE, September 2023) (KCSIE);
- [Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges](#) (Ofsted June 2021)
- [Working together to safeguard children: statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children](#) (DfE, Feb 2024);
- [Sexting in schools and colleges: responding to incidents and safeguarding young people](#) (UK Council for Child Internet Safety, March 2024);
- [Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools](#) (DfE, July 2022).

(All dates are the last updated versions of these documents)

The following school policies are relevant to this policy:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding policy
- Behaviour, Rewards & Sanctions policy
- Anti-Bullying policy
- Special Education Needs and Disability policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- SMSC policy
- PSHE & Citizenship policy
- Curriculum policy

Publication and availability

This policy is published on the school's website and is available free of charge in hard copy on request from the school office. This policy can be made available in large print or other accessible format if required.

Definitions

a. Relationships education

The term is used in the context of primary school provision where the focus is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This includes pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. It includes pupils being taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. It includes establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact - these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

b. Relationships and sex education

The term is used in the context of secondary education where the aim is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover knowledge about safer sex and sexual health, contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. RSE should provide clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education.

Secondary teaching of RSE should build on the foundation of primary Relationships Education and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships.

Responsibility statement and allocation of tasks

The Board of Governors has overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of this policy including the approval of this policy. The Board of Governors ensures that the school's leadership and management implement this policy as set out below.

Task	Allocated to	Frequency of review
Keeping the policy up to date and compliant with the law and best practice	Head of Foundation / DDSL Head of Juniors / DSL Assistant Head Pastoral / DSL	As required, and at least every 2 years
Monitoring the implementation of the policy, relevant risk assessments and any action taken in response	Head of Foundation / DDSL Head of Juniors / DSL Assistant Head Pastoral / DSL	As required, and at least every 2 years
Seeking input from interested groups (such as pupils, staff, Parents) to consider improvements to the School's processes under the policy	Head of Foundation / DDSL Head of Juniors / DSL Assistant Head Pastoral / DSL	As part of development or revision of policy
Formal annual review	Board of Governors	At least every 2 years

Equality

The school considers the makeup of the student body, including the gender and the age range of the pupils, and takes this into account in the design and teaching of RSE. The school will consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with particular protected characteristics.

The school will be alive to issues such as sexism, homophobia and stereotypes and will take positive action to build a culture of respect where such issues will not be tolerated and any incidents are identified and tackled.

The school is acutely aware of the preponderance of sexual violence and sexual harassment, including the likelihood of unreported instances. A key aim of our RSE provision is to minimise the risk of occurrence; to make clear the absolute unacceptability of sexual violence or harassment; to ensure that any victims are aware of how to report instances and that any reports will be taken seriously.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND): relationships education and relationships and sex education will be accessible for all pupils and to ensure this, teaching will be differentiated and personalised as necessary. The school is aware that some pupils can be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and will take this into consideration when designing and teaching these subjects.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) issues: the school ensures that the teaching of relationships education and relationships and sex education is sensitive and age appropriate in content and will consider when it is appropriate to teach pupils about LGBT issues. This content will be fully integrated into the programmes of study rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.

The school is aware of its legal duties, including those pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, which makes it unlawful for schools to discriminate against, harass or victimise a pupil or potential pupil in prescribed circumstances, including: in the way it provides education for pupils; in the way it provides pupils access to any benefit, facility or service; or subjecting them to any other detriment.

The school is also aware of its duties to teach about equality issues and to ensure teaching at the school does not discriminate against pupils.

Curriculum content overview - Juniors

The curriculum addresses the key areas set out in the statutory guidance to be covered by the end of primary education for relationships education:

- families and people who care;
- caring friendships;
- respectful relationships;
- online relationships;
- being safe.

[See 2019 statutory guidance](#) (updated Sept 21) for detailed content under each heading.

See [PSHE Overview Updated 2023](#) for summary of Relationships Education within PSHE.

In addition to relationships education, the Juniors will teach sex education contained in the science curriculum about the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and the reproduction in some plants and animals.

Curriculum content overview - Seniors

The curriculum addresses the key areas set out in the statutory guidance to be covered by the end of secondary education for relationships and sex education (RSE):

- families;
- respectful relationships, including friendships;
- online and the media;
- being safe;
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

See [2019 statutory guidance](#) (updated Sept 21) for detailed content under each heading.

See [RSE overview for 2023-24](#) for a summary of when each aspect of Relationships and Sex Education is taught.

Pupils are also apprised of relevant legal provisions when topics are taught, such as consent, FGM, sexuality, gender identity and exploitation.

In addition to relationships education, seniors will be taught sex education in the Biology curriculum - reproductive organs, fertilisation, pregnancy, birth, puberty, the menstrual cycle and birth control.

Curriculum delivery - Juniors

The content of the RSE and sex education curriculum is delivered through the PSHE programme as outlined in the PSHE policy, via assemblies and through curriculum Science. The PSHE programme is delivered by class teachers. Many of the themes covered are supported through other curriculum subjects: Science, English, ICT, RS and Humanities and the school endeavours to develop cross-curricular links where possible. Assemblies are delivered by members of staff and, occasionally, external agencies and guest speakers.

Each child has an entitlement to access the PSHE curriculum. The resources used and topics taught will reflect the multicultural society in which we live. Staff will ensure all pupils are comfortable within PSHE lessons and that every child has the opportunity to participate fully in all lessons regardless of their ability, gender or ethnic background. Staff will ensure that any specific learning needs are catered for within a lesson, for example, supporting any child who may require help with communication or one who requires a multi-sensory approach for engagement. The names of body parts are introduced in Key Stage 1 for safeguarding purposes.

Curriculum delivery - Seniors

The content of the relationships and sex education curriculum is delivered mainly through PSHE and relevant areas of other academic subjects such as Science and Religious Studies. PSHE is delivered by a small group of senior school teachers with most of the RSE aspects taught by the Head of PSHE. Teaching includes open discussion of topics that pupils may

find difficult.

It is also addressed within the pastoral programme:

- form period programme delivered by form tutors;
- assemblies delivered by members of staff and / or external agencies.

Some aspects may be covered via presentations or workshops delivered by external agencies.

Pupil questions

The School appreciates that pupils may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond the school's curriculum. The school's approach is to ensure that teachers are confident to deal with such questions in an age appropriate manner, recognising that children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. INSET and other training will seek to include information on how teachers can respond.

Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

The school will follow Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including about how to stay safe online. Children will also be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled.

Teachers will follow the school's safeguarding policy on confidentiality between themselves and students and manage an appropriate level of confidentiality. Students should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained, but teachers cannot offer or promise absolute confidentiality. Teachers will follow the school's safeguarding policy if a child protection issue is raised.

The school will encourage students to talk to their parents or carers and support them to do so. The school will also inform students of sources of confidential help, for example the school counsellor, GP or local young person's advice service.

Where the school invites external agencies to support the delivery of these subjects, the school will agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report will be dealt with by the external visitor.

Parents' and carers' participation

The School recognises that parents and carers are the first teachers of their children and that they play a vital role in:

- teaching their children about relationships and sex;
- maintaining the culture and ethos of the family;
- helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up;
- preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.

The School will consult with parents and carers in the development and review of this policy and on the content of the RSE programmes.

The School will communicate to parents what content will be taught and when in delivering RSE.

Parents and carers of secondary age children have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of relationships and sex education at secondary age except for those parts included in the science curriculum, which cover the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction. The school will make alternative arrangements for pupils in each case so that they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Following a request to withdraw in relation to a secondary age child, the School may request a discussion with the child's parents or carers, and where appropriate, with the child. Following that discussion, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' or carers' request to withdraw the child, up to three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. There may be exceptional circumstances where the Head of Foundation may take into account a pupil's specific needs when making this decision. Any discussions and decisions will be documented by the School.

Parents and carers of primary age children have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of any sex education that might be delivered as part of relationships and sex education at primary age, except for those parts included in the science curriculum. Agreement to such a request will be automatic. However, there is no parental right to withdraw primary, or secondary, age pupils from relationships education.

The parents' and carers' right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education will be communicated to them by the school. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education.

Consultation and review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years unless circumstances or changes in national policy necessitate an earlier review. This will involve consultation with parents and carers, and will reflect the views of teachers and pupils, together with other evidence such as lesson observations or work scrutiny.

Training

The School ensures that regular guidance and relevant training is provided at regular intervals so that staff understand what is expected of them by this policy and have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles.

Record keeping

All records created in accordance with this policy are managed in accordance with the school's policies that apply to the retention and destruction of records.

All matters arising from this policy involving a child protection issue will be recorded and dealt with under the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy.

The information created in connection with this policy may contain personal data. The school's use of this personal data will be in accordance with data protection law.