



The Sunflower Federation

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

FGB 10th February 2026

(to be reviewed January 2028)

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Introduction

This policy applies to all schools in the Sunflower Federation and is reflective of Meadow Wood School as a primary school and Breakspeare School as an all through provision from 3 -19 years with both primary and secondary pupils.

As a school which values personal development in our children and young people we ensure our Relationships and Sex and Health Education, RSE is up to date and regularly evaluated.

The term Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is used in this policy rather than Sex Education. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond the provision of biological information to focus on clarifying attitudes and values and developing self – esteem and the skills to manage relationships. We ensure throughout the federation that RSE provides ‘Opportunity with dignity’ as per our school ethos.

1. Definition:

‘Sex and relationships education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE Association, 2014).

A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.’ (PSHE Association, 2014)

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships, to enjoy their sexuality and to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. (Sex Education Forum)

2. Statutory Requirements:

As the schools within the Federation are maintained schools and we educate primary and secondary pupils our duties in this area are set out in legislation The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 to:

- Provide relationships education to all primary aged pupils
- Provide relationships and sex education to all secondary pupils
- Health Education is mandatory in all primary and secondary schools

3. Aims and Objectives:

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. (DfE 2025) Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.

The aim of RSE is to equip children and young people with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships, and to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing. RSE should help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. (DfE 2025).

As The Sunflower Federation caters for pupils of all abilities including those with severe learning difficulties it is essential that our RSE programme is sensitive to the needs and abilities of individual pupils. Teachers will use their professional judgement to determine what parts of the RSE programmes of study are relevant for each individual student.

We believe that ‘...sex and relationships education must be sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils and may need to evolve and adapt over time as the pupil population changes.’ (Equalities Act, 2010)

Effective teaching should support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right.

As a Federation we aim to highlight these core objectives; -

Attitudes and Values

- To develop an awareness of pupils’ rights and responsibilities in their relationships with others.
- To increase pupil awareness of making, sustaining and breaking relationships.
- To emphasise the importance of the caring, loving aspect of relationships within the context of sex education.
- To emphasise the importance of modesty, responsible attitudes and appropriate behaviour within relationships.

Personal and Social skills

- To develop an awareness of pupils’ own and others gender identity
- To develop an awareness of pupils’ own and others sexuality.
- To promote strategies that encourages safe sexual behaviour.
- To develop an identity of appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Knowledge and Understanding

- To provide factual information regarding the physical development and changes during puberty in relation to each sex.

- To provide the facts and information relating to reproduction and conception issues.
- To develop an awareness of abuse and exploitation, enabling students to seek help if they feel themselves to be at risk.
- To develop the understanding of physical health and mental wellbeing to be able make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.
- To develop the understanding that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important that pupils understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

4. Delivery of RSE and Health Education

RSE and Health Education is taught within the programmes of study relating to Myself, My Independence and My Wellbeing in both of the schools' curriculum models. It is incorporated as part of the school day where peer relationships are developing and as discreet blocks of lessons. Biological aspects of RSE are delivered through the science curriculum and other aspects may be included in Religious Education (RE). RSE learning is personalised. We use a range of strategies and teaching methods so that each learner can access learning in a way that ensures it is accessible to meet their needs.

Relationships and sex education

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

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships including personal boundaries
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Change, loss and grief

Relationships and Sex Education focusses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- Healthy Lifestyles

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 could include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents / carers amongst other structures. The

learning needs to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them.

The schools offer an individualised sex education curriculum. The curriculum is delivered considering the pupils' cognitive and social-emotional maturity and involves liaison with parents and carers.

As a staff we endeavour to answer questions as and when they arise, as simply as possible with the relevant information to hand. It is important to encourage responsible attitudes and decision making through role-play, discussion and where applicable teacher direction. Teaching is delivered in individual or small group sessions.

Health Education

Health and wellbeing aims to enable young people to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to understand the links between physical and mental health, recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others and to seek support when needed. This includes:

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety including fire and travel safety e.g. around water, roads and railways
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

At secondary level this also includes:

- Mental wellbeing
- Understanding the healthcare system

Curriculum Content in all strands may include:

- Body Awareness – self awareness
- The differences between males and females
- Puberty – body changes
- Biology- puberty, menstruation, sexuality, sexual urges, masturbation, sex.
- Relationships – friends, families, boyfriends/ girlfriends, types of relationships including LGBTQ+
- Families – our families, different types of families
- Strangers – People we know and don't know.
- Nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours
- Making and expressing choices
- Consent – saying no

- Safe and unsafe touches: NSPCC PANTS campaign www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/pants-underwear-rule/, NSPCC initiative in respect of public and private (NSPCC = National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children)
- Public and private
- Links to e-safety – Facebook, other social media, what are appropriate photos/posts, explicit content and explicit imagery, inappropriate content
- Asking for help- who to ask or tell
- AI technology and awareness of online safety including use of “deepfakes”
- Emotional regulation

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

5.2 The head teacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the schools, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.

5.3 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 components of RSE
- Ensuring that language used in relation to RSE is anatomically correct

Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the head teacher.

5.4 Parents and Carers and the Right to Withdraw

Most of a pupil’s informal relationships and sex education occurs within the family and the school’s programme will complement and build on this in co–operation with pupils’ parents/carers.

We acknowledge the right of parents to withdraw their children from Relationships and Sex Education except where it is part of the Science National Curriculum. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The head teacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw children from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Parents of primary school aged children do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. They have the right to withdraw their children from non-statutory sex education only.

Parents of secondary aged children have the right to request withdrawing their children from the components of statutory sex education within RSE.

We are committed to working with parents and carers. We will offer support by keeping parents informed of when specific RSE lessons will be taught. We will inform parents of the content of these lessons and offer them the opportunity to view teaching materials (e.g. lesson content, online videos, worksheets) before teaching takes place in school.

We will listen to the concerns of individual parents and work together with them regarding any aspect of RSE that may be pertinent to them and their child at any particular time. We will provide individual visual support, where appropriate, so that home and school can work together. We will notify parents when particular aspects of RSE will be taught and inform them of their right to withdraw their children from these lessons.

If a parent requests that their child be removed from RSE the school can provide support by offering education material so that the parent can deliver the part of the programme at home as and when they see fit.

6. Guiding principles for relationships, sex and health education

The schools will ensure that a curriculum is developed with the key principles in mind:

- Engagement with pupils
- Engagement and transparency with parents
- Positivity
- Careful sequencing
- Relevant and responsive
- Skilled delivery of participative education
- Whole school approach

7. Organisation and Planning

The school will provide a programme of sex and relationships education for all pupils to promote a greater understanding and awareness of themselves and their relationships with others.

For primary aged pupils the teaching of relationships and sex education will take place within a cross curricular framework. The RE Curriculum at Meadow Wood School will use the PSHE Association's *PSHE Education Planning Framework for Pupils with SEND* as the basis.

For secondary aged pupils the programme will be delivered in a cross curricular manner and during timetabled sessions, planned to meet the needs of individual pupils. Content of RSE curriculum is age appropriate to the chronological age of the learner but it is adapted in a way that is accessible for all. It is the professional responsibility of teachers to produce detailed course content and methodology appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. We also cover aspects of sex education through external accreditations such as the "Relationship" ASDAN module. RSE curriculum will take Preparation for Adulthood into account, following guidance for EHCP outcomes.

Careful consideration will be given to the maturity and intellectual development of the pupils with regard to the more explicit explanations that may form part of an RSE lesson. Avoiding confusion and distortion of facts and information is vitally important. The importance of individual rights plays a significant part within this area. Everyone has the right to say 'no' and this aspect is demonstrated through role-play and discussion. *DfE guidance* emphasises that teaching should be "age appropriate and respectful of all children, including those who may have no familiarity with the topics under discussion".

8. Recording, reporting and assessing

RSE will be monitored within the schools *Myself, My Independence and My Wellbeing* curriculum areas. Class teachers will use the assessment pathways relevant for the individual to record, report and assess. Where relevant, feedback will be recorded towards Preparation for Adulthood EHCP outcomes.

9. Monitoring

Monitoring will be undertaken by RSE leads and phase leaders in conjunction with the senior leadership team. It will include curriculum development, classroom observation and liaison with parents.

10. Linked policies

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- SEN policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Touch Policy
- Preparation for Adulthood / Careers Policy