



Fishergate Primary School

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

What is RSE at Fishergate School?

RSE comprises both Relationships and Sex Education. It supports pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development (SMSC) and is a large part of the PSHE curriculum (Personal, Social and Health Education). Relationships Education at Fishergate gives children the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive, healthy relationships; it involves learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up. It is inclusive of all families, including, for example, LGBT+ families, children who are looked after or adopted from care, and families with single parents. We help children to understand that there are many kinds of loving and caring relationships.

Fishergate defines Sex Education provision as a safe environment for children to have a factual, age-appropriate introduction to human reproduction and to ask questions related to this topic. It enables children to access a safe source of information. Sex Education at Fishergate School forms part of a broader scheme of work presented in conjunction with Relationships Education. Although the teaching of Sex Education is not mandatory, we believe that access to good Sex Education, as part of the RSE curriculum, is essential in helping to develop informed, resilient, self-confident, self-aware and articulate young people who are able to make safe and positive choices for themselves.

A commitment to promote gender equality is central to our ethos. The RSE scheme of work outlines content designed to support this commitment. The Fishergate School community recognises the need to challenge stereotypes and inequality so that all our pupils can flourish.

The school has a legal duty to provide Relationship Education for its pupils, as outlined in *The Relationship Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019*, made under sections 34 and 35 of the *Children and Social Work Act 2017*.

Outcomes for our pupils

All content in RSE supports the wider work of the curriculum in helping to foster pupil wellbeing, and to develop the resilience and values we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society.

Outcomes for pupils include the following:

- Pupils are able to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security
- Pupils are able to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them

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- Pupils know what constitutes positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support our mental wellbeing
- RSE contributes to the prevention of abuse and protection of children, by teaching the knowledge they need to be safe and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse; this includes peer on peer abuse
- Pupils are prepared for the physiological and emotional changes they will go through during puberty, where possible before these occur, and understand that these are natural and normal changes
- Pupils are able to articulate what makes a relationship healthy, and understand that maintaining both emotional and physical health are important
- Pupils are empowered to challenge inequality and promote respect for all
- Pupils are confident in their use of a vocabulary with which they can talk about relationships, and about sex. (NB: Within our school, we use the scientific language for the genitals from the outset. The children are taught that whilst they may use other words for reproductive parts at home, at school we use scientific words.)

Our Gender Equality Commitment

- Everyone is kind to each other and we respect the ways in which we are different
- Teachers will make sure everyone is represented fairly in the resources we use (e.g books, worksheets, flipcharts, displays)
- Everyone has the same opportunities and choices
- We don't ask girls and boys to compete against each other - we work together
- Children learn about what equality looks like in their lessons
- Children challenge stereotypes and feel confident to speak up when they see prejudice
- We don't use sexist language
- Children's gender identity is respected

Delivery of RSE

Much of our RSE curriculum is delivered through PSHE lessons, circle time, assemblies, Computing and Science. It is a spiral curriculum, where pupils return to the same topics in each phase, reinforcing previous learning and encountering increasing complexity. Some content is delivered through dedicated lessons.

We use a wide range of resources including BigTalk Education's *Bodies, Babies and Bellybuttons* by Lynette Smith, Fishergate's *Resilient Primary Classroom, Learning for Peace* by peacemakers.org.uk, Bloomsbury's *Sex and Relationships Education 7-9 and 9-11*, *Living and Growing* by John Lloyd and Clare Rowland and *The Family Book* by Todd Parr.



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In July 2021, staff also received training from BigTalk Education as part of their professional development.

As outlined in the Equalities Act 2010, no pupil is discriminated against because of their sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, educational need, religion or belief, nationality, ethnic or national origin, or home circumstances. Any pupil with additional needs is identified by the teacher and every effort made to help them join in during the RE/RSE lessons. Occasionally, children receive a tailored programme of lessons for Sex Education delivered 1-1, where this has been discussed and agreed with parents/carers. This may be because they have a special educational need which necessitates adaptation of the lesson content, or because they have been a victim of abuse.

Most Sex Education lessons are delivered to the whole class; however for some sessions in Years 5 and 6 pupils are grouped by sex. For any children identifying as transgender, school will liaise with the child's parent/carer to determine which group the child would be most comfortable with. Sex Education lessons are usually delivered by class teachers, so that children see that it is normal for the adults they know well to talk about sex and relationships.

In order to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere for RSE, we ensure that pupils feel able to ask questions freely, confident that they will be answered, and that their views will be respected by other pupils. Fishergate believes that children are best educated and protected from harm and exploitation by discussing issues openly within the context of the RSE programme.

Some questions that arise during these lessons may relate to sensitive topics. In this situation, the teacher may answer the question separate from the rest of the class. In Years 5 and 6, children are also encouraged to write their questions down anonymously, so that the teacher can review them first and choose when and how to answer them. If teachers are unsure how to answer any particular question, support can be sought from the RSE coordinator in order to give an age-appropriate answer.

Partnership with Parents

Parents are invited annually to view and discuss resources to be used in Sex Education lessons. Pupils are encouraged to speak to their parents/carers about what they have learnt and to continue the learning at home. Staff at school are happy to support parents and carers in answering any questions at home.

In years 4, 5 and 6, our school chooses to teach Sex Education as part of Relationships Education, which includes age-appropriate information on reproduction. (As school is legally obligated to provide pupils with Relationship



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Education, parents do not have a right to withdraw their children from these lessons.)

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the SE element of RSE only, but not the reproduction elements of the National Curriculum for Science. Before lessons begin, school will inform them of the right to withdraw their child. Teachers will have a further discussion with any parents/carers who wish to withdraw their child from Sex Education; sometimes it is possible to arrange a 1-1 programme of lessons with agreed, bespoke content.

Safeguarding our Children

We want our children to feel RSE lessons provide a safe space in which to share their feelings and experiences. Ground rules are agreed at the start of lessons: to listen to one another actively and without interruption, and to respect that opinions and experiences may be different. Staff will always act on any cause for concern or disclosure made by reporting these to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Tina Clarke. In line with our Safeguarding Policy, teachers explain to children that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality: information which leads any member of staff to believe a child is at risk must be reported in order for the child to receive the help they need.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Planning is monitored by the senior leadership to ensure all aspects of the scheme of work are delivered; pupil voice and parent feedback is used to identify our strengths and areas for improvement in RSE provision.

This policy is linked to the school's policies for Safeguarding, Anti-bullying and Child Protection.

This policy has been produced in consultation with parents, staff and the Governing Body; it will be reviewed every two years and will be published on the school website. Copies are also available from the school office.

Date: January 2023

Review Date: January 2025