



# Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy

Prepared for:

Parkview Primary School & Redwood Primary School Federation

Policy review dates and changes

Review Date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date implemented
Sept ember 2017	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Amalgamation of Parkview's and Redwood's policy Removal of Healthy school reference	October 2017
January 2020	Curriculum and Standards Committee	Reference to Statutory Guidance 2020 included	January 2020
January 2022	Curriculum and Standards Committee	N/A	ongoing
June 2023	Curriculum and Standards Committee	N/A	ongoing
July 2024	Full Governing Body	N/A	ongoing
July 2025	FGB	N/A	ongoing
October 2025	Sonia Sahota/Fiona Priestley	Updated with 2026 Dfe guidance- highlighted in yellow	October 2025

# Relationship, Sex and Health Education

## 1. Sources of Information

This policy has been informed by:

- DfE 'Relationships and Sex Education Guidance', 2019.
- Ofsted, 2013, *Sex and Relationships*. Office for Standards in Education, London.
- Social Exclusion Unit, 1999, *Teenage Pregnancy Strategy*. Social Exclusion Unit, London.
- National Curriculum in England, Science programmes of study Keys stages 1 and 2, 2013
- Government Response: Life lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools, 2015
- DfE Statutory Guidance: Relationships, Sex and Health Education, 2025.

## 2. How this Policy was Developed

This policy is descriptive of current practice in both schools in both Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) and in the handling of sex related incidents. It has been developed through a full consultation process with staff, parents and governors. This document was circulated to all relevant parties.

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Issues considered:

- Content of sex education
- Methodology, style and approach, location in curriculum
- Withdrawal of pupils
- Confidentiality
- Child sexual exploitation
- Skills
- Morals and Values framework
- Who delivers sex education and the use of visitors

## 3. Introduction to RHSE

The term *Relationships, Health and Sex Education, RSE*, is used in this policy rather than *sex education*. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

According to the latest DfE statutory guidance RHSE:

**'...pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.'**

*DfE 'Sex and Relationship Statutory Guidance', 2019.*

The Sex Education Forum define RHSE as learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up and relationships. It should equip children and young people with the information, skills and positive values to have safe, fulfilling relationships and to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing.

The statutory guidance (2025) states that RHSE should have the following main elements in primary schools:

- **Families and people who care for me**
- **Caring friendships**
- **Respectful relationships**
- **Online relationships**
- **Being safe**
- **Water safety (including the Water Safety Code), fire, road and railway safety**
- **Emerging risks such as vaping, gambling harms, and addictive behaviours linked to gaming and social media**
- **Online exploitation including deepfakes and sextortion and online rights**
- **The concept of consent and boundaries, taught progressively in an age-appropriate way**
- **Change and loss e.g. Bereavement**

There are also elements linked to Physical health and mental wellbeing:

- **Mental wellbeing**
- **Internet safety and harms**
- **Physical health and fitness**
- **Healthy eating**
- **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco, including addiction**
- **Health and prevention**
- **Basic first aid**
- **Changing adolescent body**

The schools' approach to RHSE consists of:

1. the taught National Curriculum Science Programme of Study
2. RHSE modules within each Key Stage delivered within a planned PSHE Education programme
3. pastoral support for students who experience difficulties
4. provision of appropriate information through leaflets, display of posters and appropriate websites, such as Childline
5. through cross-curricular opportunities and enrichment

### **3.1 Guiding Principles**

Our RHSE curriculum follows the seven guiding principles set out in the 2025 DfE statutory guidance:

- A positive and empowering approach.
- Sequenced knowledge that builds before pupils need it.
- Engagement with pupils, parents and staff in curriculum design.
- Inclusivity and accessibility for all learners.
- Safeguarding embedded in all aspects of teaching.
- Transparent use of resources, all of which are shareable with parents.
- Focus on equipping pupils with knowledge, skills and resilience to thrive.

## **4. Why RHSE?**

### **4.1 Legal obligations**

Maintained primary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'Relationships, Health and Sex education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents. Parents have a right to

withdraw their children from 'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science.

#### **4.2 The needs of young people and the role of schools**

The overall aims of the schools and National curriculum are:

- to provide opportunities for all pupils to learn and to achieve
- to promote pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

#### **Guiding Principles**

Our RHSE curriculum is based on the guiding principles set out in the 2025 DfE statutory guidance:

- A positive, empowering and protective approach.
- Sequenced learning that builds knowledge before children need it.
- Engagement with pupils, parents and staff to ensure relevance and clarity.
- Teaching that is inclusive and accessible for all learners.

Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

### **5. Morals and Values Framework**

In the federation we believe that effective Relationships, Health and Sex Education is essential for young people to make responsible and well informed decisions and choices about their lives.

The RHSE programme is integrated into the PSHE curriculum within the school and is delivered such that it meets the National Healthy Schools Standard for this theme.

Our approach to RHSE will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships; including the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up children
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views.
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships based on mutual consent, rather than coercion.
- The right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of.
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters. It does not promote any one form of relationship, but ensures there is no stigmatism towards children based on home circumstances.
- Healthy relationships are based on respect, equality and consent. Pupils will be taught that they have the right to set and respect personal boundaries in friendships and wider relationships.

We also believe that pupils have an entitlement to:

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- age and circumstance appropriate RHSE
- access to help from trusted adults and helping services.

RHSE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school's approach to RHSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda and sensationalism.

## 6. Inclusion

'Mainstream schools and special schools have a duty to ensure that children with special educational needs and learning difficulties are properly included in sex and relationships education. Sex and relationship education should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives'.

*DfEE SRE Guidance, July 2000*

Young people may have varying needs regarding RHSE depending on their circumstances and background. The schools strongly believe that all students should have access to RHSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve Parkview and Redwood Primary's approach to RSE, we will take account of:

**The needs of boys as well as girls** - Girls tend to have greater access to RHSE than boys, both through the media, particularly magazines, and the home. We will consider the particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying. Some issues may be dealt with in single gender groups. The new guidance states that RSHE should promote equal, safe and enjoyable relationships in a way which promotes gender equality, in line with the Equalities Act 2010.

**Ethnic and cultural diversity** - Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RHSE. The schools' will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups. An opt-out consent letter may be requested.

**Varying home backgrounds** - We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

**Sexuality** - On average, about 5% of our pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian, bi-sexual or transgender (LGBTQ+). Students may also have LGBTQ+ parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our pupils will meet and work with LGBTQ+ people throughout their lives. Our approach to RHSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall promote a culture of care and respect and also actively tackle homophobic bullying which often at this stage comes in the form of homophobic name-calling.

**Special educational needs and Learning Difficulties** - We shall take account of the fact that some pupils may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RHSE needs. All pupils with SEND receive Relationships, Health and Sex Education. Teachers will plan work differently to in order to meet the needs of individuals.

**The teaching programme for Relationships, Health and Sex Education** - We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of RHSE at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, with adaptations for those whose cognitive development is particularly slow.

Pupils will learn, in an age-appropriate way, that healthy relationships are based on respect and consent. This will include understanding personal boundaries, the right to say no, and the importance of seeking and giving permission in friendships and everyday interactions.

**Pupils who use alternative methods of communication** - Some pupils have physical, visual or hearing impairments or are unable to use speech and may use signing, symbols and/or communication switches and aids. The staff will adapt their teaching of RHSE to ensure that these pupils have equal access. For example Writing with Symbols computer programme includes 'private' body parts.

**Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties** are not excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods, they will experience most of the basic content; self-awareness, gender awareness, body recognition, privacy.

**Pupils with autism** will require individual teaching to meet their specific needs. RHSE may be included in a TEACHH programme and Picture Exchange Communication Systems, PECS, is suitable for areas such as toilet training. Explicit teaching and use of pictures and visual aids is essential to avoid confusion.

## 7. A Whole School Approach

A whole school approach will be adopted for RHSE that actively involves the whole school community. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding RHSE. In particular:

**The senior leadership team, SLT,** will endeavour to support the provision and development of RHSE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

**The designated RHSE leader,** will maintain an overview of RHSE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, accessing training, developing the provision to meet students' needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies and monitoring and evaluation.

**Teaching staff** All teachers are involved in the schools' RHSE provision. Some teach RHSE through the PSHE programme and some through science and other curriculum areas. All teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. Any teacher can be approached by a pupil who experiences a difficulty regarding relationship and sex issues. Teachers will be consulted about the schools' approach to RHSE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

**Non-teaching staff** may be involved in a supportive role in some RHSE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with pupils. They will have access to information about the RHSE programme and supported in their pastoral role.

**Governors** have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RHSE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings. A designated governor has responsibility to oversee PSHE Education, including RHSE and access appropriate training.

**Parents/carers** have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the schools' RHSE provision. All teaching resources used in RHSE will be made available to parents on request. The schools will only use external providers whose resources are transparent and fully shareable with parents. The schools will seek and take account of parent/carer views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers.

**The school nurse** can play a key role in **supporting** the teacher in RHSE both in terms of advice, input into lessons on request, provision of pastoral support for pupils and resources. The schools will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse. However, the class teacher will still take the lead within RHSE sessions.

**Outside agencies and speakers** This, in the primary phase is anticipated as being the school nurse. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The schools may also promote age appropriate support that students can access, such as Childline, parents, religious or health professionals. A procedure for the use of visitors is available on request.

**Pupils** have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RHSE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about their RHSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.

## 8. The Taught RHSE Programme

The RHSE programme will be delivered as part of the Federation's approach to PSHE Education and Citizenship.

At Redwood Primary School, the Jigsaw scheme of work has a fully integrated approach to RHSE within the PSHE curriculum. Please see Appendix 1 for information regarding coverage of the RHSE curriculum through this scheme of work.

Similarly, at Parkview Primary School, the PSHE Matters scheme of work also has a fully integrated approach to RSE within the PSHE curriculum.

Both schemes across the Federation are enhanced by:

- Assemblies
- R-Time sessions
- Visitors into school such as NSPCC workshops
- E-Safety lessons
- Themed events such as Mental Health week
- Specific lessons covering water safety and the Water Safety Code.
- Dedicated teaching on vaping, gambling harms, and online safety challenges including deepfakes, sextortion and unhealthy screen use.

### Water Safety

Pupils will be taught the Water Safety Code and how to stay safe in and around water, including rivers, lakes, canals, swimming pools and the sea. This includes recognising potential dangers, understanding the importance of swimming with supervision, and knowing what to do in an emergency.

### Emerging Risks and Harms

In line with updated DfE guidance (2025), pupils will be taught about:

- The health risks of vaping and strategies to resist peer pressure.
- The risks of gambling and gaming-related harms.
- The impact of excessive screen time and unhealthy social media use on wellbeing.
- The dangers of online exploitation, including deepfakes, sextortion and the sharing of inappropriate content. These topics will be taught in an age-appropriate way, with a focus on building resilience and making safe, informed choices.

### 8.1 Aims of the programme

The overall aims of the RHSE programme are to:

1. Provide accurate information about, and understanding of, RSE issues
2. Dispel myths
3. Explore a range of attitudes towards RSE issues and to help pupils to reach their own informed views and choices for a healthier lifestyle
4. Develop respect and care for others
5. Increase students' self-esteem

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6. Develop skills relevant to effective management of relationships and sexual situations. Examples include communication with and empathy towards others, risk assessment, assertiveness, conflict management, decision making, seeking help and helping others
7. Contribute to a reduction in local and national teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and abortion rates.
8. Equip pupils with knowledge and strategies to stay safe in and around water.
9. Develop resilience and informed decision-making in response to modern risks such as vaping, gambling and harmful online content.

## **8.2 Place in the curriculum**

The main RHSE programme will be delivered through PSHE lessons by the class teacher, often with a Teaching Assistant supporting. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons.

## **8.3 Content and learning objectives**

The RHSE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as pupils mature.

See Appendix 1 for content and learning objectives covered in the curriculum at Redwood.

RHSE at both schools will contribute to the PSHE and Citizenship Curriculum by ensuring all pupils:

- Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- Are able to learn parts of the body and describe how their body works
- Can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- Are prepared for puberty

## **8.4 Teaching methods and resources**

A wide range of teaching methods are used, that enable pupils to actively participate in their own learning. This includes use of quizzes, case studies, research, role-play, video, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers. Where it is regarded as particularly beneficial pupils are divided into single gender groups for a part of lessons or whole lessons. It is desirable that the class teacher and the TA or a member of staff well known to the children lead the sessions. Should the teacher be absent it would not be undertaken by a short-term supply teacher.

The range of materials used will be available for review on request to the PSHE leaders.

## **8.5 Ground Rules and distancing techniques**

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that neither the pupils nor the teachers are put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teachers are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RHSE.

- Pupils will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one will be forced to take part in the discussion.
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used - giving children the knowledge and understanding they need to stay safe, including the ability to identify and report signs of abuse, while reducing stigma.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to pupils.

## **8.6 Answering pupils' questions**

Sometimes an individual pupil will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered directly and can be addressed later. Parkview and Redwood Primary Schools believe that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in such situations, referring concerns to the PSHE leader

- The schools believe that pupils should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner.
- Occasionally a pupil may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide about whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how.
- Teachers will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with pupils and by taking an approach that encourages pupils to be mature and sensible.
- If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, they will acknowledge this and suggest that they and the pupils research the answer to the question later.
- If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the pupil who asked it.
- If a question is too personal, teachers will remind pupils about the ground rules and if necessary point out appropriate sources of support.
- If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they will follow the schools' safeguarding procedures.
- Teachers should set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which does not encourage giggling and silliness.
- Pupils should be encouraged to write down questions anonymously and post them in a question box; the teacher will have time to prepare answers to all questions before the next session, but will choose not to respond to any questions which are inappropriate.

## **8.7 Monitoring, evaluation and assessment**

The programme is regularly evaluated by the RHSE leaders. The views of pupils and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis. Elements of Sex Education in the science curriculum will be assessed formally.

Monitoring and evaluation arrangements are open to external assessment by the LA and Ofsted.

## **8.8 Assessment**

Pupils' progress in RHSE is assessed as part of the PSHE assessment. Pupils' knowledge, skills and attitudes are assessed through a range of methods including teacher, peer and self assessment.

## **8.9 Parental concerns and withdrawal of students**

The schools are committed to working with parents/carers. Under the DfE Statutory Guidance published in 2019, parents/carers have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of RHSE that are taught in National Curriculum Science or where RHSE issues arise incidentally in other subject areas.

The school will actively involve parents and carers in the development of RSHE provision.

- The RSHE policy will be published on the school website and reviewed regularly.
- Parents will be consulted on significant updates and are welcome to provide feedback.
- All teaching resources will be available for parents to view on request.
- The school will only use external providers whose resources are transparent and fully shareable with parents.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RHSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RHSE provision we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision and discuss any negative experiences or feelings which may result from the pupil's exclusion and ways in which these can be minimised.

## **9. Pastoral Support for Pupils who Experience Difficulties**

### **9.1 The nature of support available to pupils**

The schools take their role in the promotion of pupil welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for pupils in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through their class sessions or through the roles provided by the Learning Mentors or TAs. They offer a listening ear and kind eyes and, where appropriate, information and advice. The school nurse offers a health and support service to pupils. Where appropriate, pupils are referred to the school nurse and/or outside helping agencies. The schools will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people, promote their existence to pupils and endeavour to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to pupils needs.

### **9.2 Confidentiality and informing parents/carers**

We are aware that some parents find it hard to cope with their children's sexual development, and are happy for the schools to take the initiative. We will take every opportunity to inform and involve parents and carers:

- by making our commitment clear in the schools' prospectus
- by placing RHSE on the agenda at the relevant governors' meeting
- by discussing and agreeing a consistent approach for pupils to be used at home and school. RHSE materials will be available to parents who wish to supplement or deliver RHSE to their child at home.
- by including RHSE in the Home/School Partnership Agreement
- by inviting parents to a meeting where resources are available, and their use explained.

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Safeguarding procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

Child Sexual Abuse

The schools have a Child Protection Policy and Procedure, which is available on request.

#### **Confidentiality**

As a general rule a child's confidentiality will be maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving safeguarding issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. If so the Designated Safeguarding Leads will be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- the seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the pupil may be experiencing
- the pupil's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.

Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer. (See Confidentiality Policy)

The pupil concerned will be informed that the confidentiality is breached and the reasons why. The pupil will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

### **9.3 Dealing with bullying**

Bullying commonly includes inappropriate and hurtful comments and behaviours concerning sexism, homophobia, appearance and other sex/relationship issues. The schools take the issue of bullying very seriously. This is reflected in the schools' anti-bullying policies. Staff will challenge and deal sensitively with any evidence of bullying. Pupils will be encouraged to report any incidents. Staff will endeavour to

investigate any incidents of bullying as soon as possible and give feedback to pupils who complain of bullying. The RSE and PSHE programmes will consider bullying and aim to discourage bullying based on sexism, homophobia, appearance and other relationship and sex issues.

All schools are required to report and log all known incidents of bullying on school premises. It is important that any form of harassment or hurtful comments of a sexual nature are seen within the context of the schools anti-bullying policy.

## **10. Safeguarding**

### **10.1 Being attentive**

RHSE should be taught by the class teacher or a member of staff who knows the children well and displays a good relationship with them. Staff should be aware of children's backgrounds. If unsure, staff should speak to the Designated Safeguarding Leads. Staff should be aware that conversations may lead to disclosures. Staff will need to be vigilant and ensure any issues are followed up on a one to one basis.

### **10.2 Reporting concerns**

All staff should be attentive when teaching RHSE and report any concerns with immediate effect to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Staff should adhere to the safeguarding policy which should be re-read and signed at the beginning of the academic year.

### **10.3 Online Exploitation**

Staff should be aware that new forms of online exploitation (such as deepfakes, sextortion or coercion via social media) may emerge in pupil conversations or disclosures. These will be treated as safeguarding concerns and referred immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

### **Dissemination of the RHSE Policy**

All staff members and governors will receive a copy of this policy. Copies are available on request. A short summary of this policy is included in the school prospectus. The policy has been fully discussed in a governors and staff meeting.

This policy has been updated to reflect the statutory RSHE guidance (DfE, 2025). The school will ensure full compliance with all requirements by September 2026.