Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date adopted	April 2023
Last reviewed:	December 2024
Next review due:	December 2025

Introduction

This policy helps ensure that the whole school community (pupils, parents/carers, staff, and governors) have a shared understanding of this important area of the curriculum. It is accessible to all stakeholders on the school website or by request.

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

This is a working document which provides guidance and information on all aspects of RSE and aims to provide a secure framework within which staff can work.

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 provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

Definitions

Health Education
Health Education is taught at The Southover Partnership School as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum. Health Education aims to give children the information they need to make good decisions about their own physical and mental health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise. Health Education begins with 'Growing and Changing', moving from naming body parts into how our body changes during puberty, both mentally and physically. These are the curriculum building blocks which allow progression of these themes as pupils move into the secondary part of the school and undertake RSE.

Relationships and Sex Education
Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is a compulsory part of the curriculum for all Secondary schools. The aim of including RSE in all secondary school curriculums is to teach pupils 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 PSHE. The term 'Relationships' in 'Relationships and Sex Education' stresses that the approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values and aims to develop self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships. 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 (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance, Dept of Education, 2020).

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Aims

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

- To teach all aspects of PSHE through a combination of small group and 1:1 sessions, depending upon the needs and ability of the individual pupil.
- To teach pupils about the rich diversity of people in the community around them and within the wider world. Our PSHE curriculum encompasses teaching pupils the value of tolerance and kindness to those around us and to celebrate each person's strengths beliefs, abilities, culture and sexuality.
- To make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by students to help them establish and maintain relationships.
- To enable young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.
- To help young people make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. To support them through their physical, emotional and moral development and help them learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.
- For pupils to learn about what makes a happy and healthy relationship. In turn this will also help pupils to recognise a relationship which may be unhappy or abusive. Pupils can learn the effects of positive, and conversely negative relationships, upon their mental health. These relationships could relate to family members, partners or friends, both in their physical environment and in online spaces.
- To provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place in a safe and informative way. It is vital to ensure that pupils who may use alternative methods of communication have been provided with the necessary vocabulary in order for them to effectively communicate their questions and needs.
- To prepare pupils for puberty in a way that is relevant and meaningful to each individual, teaching them about the physical and mental changes this may present, including the importance of health and hygiene.
- To help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- To create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- To teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- To provide pupils with accurate information about themselves and their bodies, in order to reduce anxiety about anticipated changes associated with puberty and to normalise some of these processes (for example, anxiety about periods starting).

Addressing Relationships and Sex Education has three main elements enabling pupils to:

- Explore their own and other peoples' attitudes and values.
- Develop and practice personal and social skills.
- Increase their knowledge and skills. The RSE policy is underpinned by the ethos and values of our school, and we uphold it as an entitlement for all our pupils. We recognise the need to work as a whole school community to ensure a shared understanding of these values and to deliver an effective programme that meets the needs of every one of our pupils. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

RSE and Sixth Form
Although the statutory requirements do not apply to sixth form provisions, The Southover Partnership School will continue to support students by offering these subjects. This is in line with DfE recommendations alongside our mission to enable our pupils to thrive and live happy, confident lives.

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Equal Opportunities

Statement of The Southover Partnership School's commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion, with reference to the Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policies

- The Southover Partnership considers the needs of different groups within the school. (Boys and Girls, varying home backgrounds, Sexuality, SEN, LAC, Faith, Ethnicity and Culture etc). The programme is differentiated at point of delivery by trained staff, so that it is appropriate to pupils age, ability, gender and maturity.
- We aim to ensure all pupils are treated fairly, with no discrimination or bullying on grounds of gender, race, religion, colour, language, culture, social circumstances, appearance, sexuality, ability or disability etc.

The guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- The Equality Act 2010 and schools
- The SEN Code of Practice
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools
- SMSC requirements for independent schools
- The Southover Partnership will follow best practice by ensuring that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence their teaching of RSE lessons.

Statutory Requirements

Under section 3.6 of the National Curriculum, SRE is compulsory from year 7 onwards.

Secondary schools must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the government committed to making relationships education (primary) and sex and relationships education (secondary) statutory in all schools.

At The Southover Partnership School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy Development

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

- Review – a working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties consulted about the policy
- Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their SRE
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with trustees and ratified

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Curriculum

Our curriculum and learning opportunities are set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt these when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking in consideration the age, needs 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 do not seek answers online.

Delivery of RSE

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

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional when relevant.
RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

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, LGBT 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).

Roles and Responsibilities

The board of Trustees
The trustees will approve the SRE policy and hold the executive headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Executive Headteacher
The executive headteacher and Heads of School are responsible for ensuring that SRE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of SRE.

Staff
Staff allocated to delivering SRE are responsible for:

- Delivering SRE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to SRE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

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- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from components of SRE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching SRE. Staff who have concerns about teaching SRE are encouraged to discuss this with their Head of School or the executive headteacher.

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

Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of SRE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Executive Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Executive Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from SRE.

Training

Staff members are trained on the delivery of SRE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Executive Headteacher and SLT will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching SRE.

Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of SRE is monitored by Heads of School and the PSHE Lead through:

- Work scrutinies
- planning scrutinies
- learning walks
- pupil interviews/questionnaires

Pupils' development in SRE is monitored by Heads of School and PSHE teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. Pupils' progress will assessed through the 6 stages as outlined by the PSHE Association – see Appendix 4.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE Lead and the Executive Headteacher, annually and in line with government guidance. At every review, the policy will be approved by Trustees' Quality of Education Committee.

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Appendix 1

Curriculum and Learning Opportunities for Relationships and Sex Education in PSHE

Positive Relationships
- The qualities students should expect and exhibit in a wide variety of positive relationships.
- Developing the skills of team working, including cooperation, negotiation, compromise and communication skills: such as offering and receiving constructive feedback and assertiveness.
- To explore the range of positive qualities people bring to relationships, and that relationships can cause strong feelings and emotions.
- The features of positive and stable relationships and unhealthy relationships.

Portrayal of Relationships
- Understand that the media portrayal of relationships may not reflect real life and the possible impact of this on people's expectations.
- To be aware of different types of relationships, including those within families, friendships, romantic or intimate relationships and the factors that can affect these.
- To recognise the portrayal and impact of sex in the media and social media (music videos, advertising and sexual images shared between young people, the unrealistic portrayal of relationships and sex in pornography).

Family Life
- The nature and importance of marriage, civil partnerships and other stable, long-term relationships for family life and bringing up children.
- Understand that marriage is a commitment, entered into freely – never forced through threat or coercion; how to safely access sources of support for themselves or others should they feel vulnerable.
- Understand the roles and responsibilities of parents, carers and children in families. How to manage or deal with the breakdown of a relationship and the effect of change, including loss, separation, divorce and bereavement.

Forming and maintaining Relationships
- Understand the importance of friendship and begin to consider love and sexual relationships in this context; understand what expectations might be of having a girlfriend/boyfriend.
- To consider different levels of intimacy and their consequences, including the acknowledgement of (and respect for) the right not to have intimate relationships until ready.
- Readiness for sex and the benefits of delaying sex.

Consent
- Understand that consent is freely given, and that being pressurised, manipulated or coerced to agree to something is not consent.
- Understand that the seeker of consent is responsible for ensuring that consent has been given, and if consent is not given or withdrawn – that the decision should always be respected.
- The law in relation to consent (including the legal age of consent and the responsibility in law for the seeker of consent to ensure that consent has been given).
- How to seek the consent of another person and be sure that consent has been given; how to assertively withhold or withdraw consent.

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Contraception and Sexual Health
- Understand that certain infections can be spread through sexual activity and that barrier contraceptives offer some protection against certain STI's.
- The purpose and importance of immunisation and vaccination (such as HPV vaccination).
- Understand the choice of contraception, including the condom and pill; to negotiate condom use and to develop communication and skills necessary for contraceptive use.
- The risks related to unprotected sex, which could include exploring the consequences of unintended pregnancy and the options available in such circumstances.

Peer Pressure
- To recognise peer pressure and have strategies to manage it; to recognise "group think" and to develop strategies for managing it.
- To understand the feelings and pressure that the need for peer approval can generate.

LGBT+ Inclusive
- Understand the difference between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation; to recognise that there is diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality.
- To know the terms associated with sex, gender identity and sexual orientation and to understand accepted terminology.
- Understand the unacceptability of sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, racist and disablist language and behaviour, the need to challenge it and how to do so.

Bullying and Abuse
- To recognise bullying and abuse in all its forms (including prejudicebased bullying) and to have the skills and strategies to manage being targeted or witnessing others being targeted.
- The support services available should students feel – or believe others feel – they are being abused/in an unhealthy relationship; how to access these support services.

Friendship Groups and Gangs
- Laws relating to carrying of offensive weapons (including what might motivate someone to carry one and the range of consequences); strategies for managing pressure to carry a weapon.
- The difference between friendship groups and gangs (including the risks posed by memberships of gangs); strategies for managing pressure to join a group or gang and how to access appropriate support.

Online Relationships
- The safe and responsible use of information communication technology (including safe management of personal data).
- To establish clear personal boundaries around those aspects of life the students wish to be private: shared only with specific people and made public. To understand their right to privacy.
- How to manage any request or pressure to share an image of themselves or of others; who to talk to if they have concerns and when the sharing of explicit images may constitute a serious criminal offence.

Managing Healthy Relationships
- To develop strategies to manage strong emotions and feelings and to recognise the characteristics and benefits of positive, strong, supportive, equal relationships.
- To manage changes in personal relationships including the ending of relationships and the role peers can play in supporting one another and how to access organisations and other sources of information, advice and support.

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Portrayal of Relationships
- To understand the role of sex in the media and its impact on sexuality (including pornography and related sexual ethics).
- To understand the pernicious influence of gender double standards and victim-blaming.
- To manage unwanted attention in a variety of contexts (including harassment and stalking).

Different Types of Families
- To understand that living together, marriage and civil parnerships are ways that people freely, and without coercion, demonstrate their commitment to each other.
- To develop and understanding of parenting skills, and qualities that are of central importance to family life (including the implications of young parenthood).
- The impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances.
- The reasons why parents choose to adopt/foster or to place children for adoption/fostering. Understand that fertility levels can vary in different people and decreases with age. The options open to people who are not able to conceive.

Unhealthy Relationships
- To recognise when a relationship is unhealthy or abusive (including emotional and physical abuse of violence including "honour" based violence, forced marriage and rape) and strategies to manage this or to access support for themselves or others at risk.
- The impact of domestic abuse and the statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships experiencing difficulties.
- To recognise when others are using manipulation, persuasion or coercion and how to respond. To develop an awareness of exploitation, bullying, harassment and control in relationships and the skills and strategies to respond appropriately or access support.

Consent
- To understand the concept of consent; how to seek consent and to respect others' right to give, not give or withdraw consent to engage in different degrees of sexual activity.
- To understand and respect others' faith and cultural expectations concerning relationships and sexual activity and to assess readiness for sex.
- To recognise the impact of drugs and alcohol on choices and sexual behaviour.

Conception and Pregnancy Choices
- To understand the consequences of unintended pregnancy and of teenage parenthood and about the pathways available in the event of unintended pregnancy including the possible physical and emotional reactions and responses people may have to each option and who to talk to for accurate, impartial advice and support.
- To recognise how lifestyle choices affect a developing foetus.

Sexual Health and Contraception
- To identify reliable sources of information about sexual health services and to learn about accessing and the correct use of contraception (including emergency contraception); negotiating condom use.
- Learn about STI's, including HIV/AIDs, how to protect themselves and others from infection and how to respond if they feel they (or others) are at risk.

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LGBT+ Inclusive

- Learn about diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality, including sources of support and reassurance and how to access them.

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By the end of Secondary School pupils should know:

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• 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 • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the • Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

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TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	• 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	The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships 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)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• 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, sex and friendship • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in • sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g., physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • 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 • 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

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Appendix 3 - Parent form for withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
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			

PSHE EDUCATION PLANNING FRAMEWORK FORMAT

1. Self-Awareness
2. Self-Care, Support and Safety
3. Managing Feelings
4. Changing and Growing
5. Healthy Lifestyles
6. The World I Live In

Learning outcomes for each topic area in progressive stages, starting with the first stage 'Encountering', through to the final stage 'Enhancement'.

Encountering	Foundation	Core	Development	Enrichment	Enhancement
Responding to stimuli	**Being able to identify**	**Identify and give simple reasons**	**Identify, name and describe**	**Identify, name, describe and explain**	**Identify, name, describe explain and evaluate**
(effective engagement in the learning process)	(underpinning learning)	(fundamental learning elements)	(increasing understanding of learning)	(deepening of application of learning)	(applying learning in different contexts)