Sex and Relationships Policy – 2026-2029

Policy adopted by Governing Body	Autumn 2026
To be reviewed	Autumn 2029
Signed by Head Teacher	S. Morris
Ratified by Governors	24.09.26

2026 Statutory Guidance Updates

- *The school will ensure openness and transparency with parents regarding RSE content and teaching resources.*
- *RSE teaching will reflect current statutory guidance effective from September 2026.*
- *Teaching will include age-appropriate learning relating to online safety, healthy relationships, boundaries, consent, respect, digital resilience and seeking help.*
- *Staff training and safeguarding procedures will be reviewed annually alongside this policy.*

1. What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE is learning accurate and age-appropriate skills, attitudes and knowledge about the body, reproduction, sex and sexual health. RSE also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE).

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained primary school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. We are not required to provide sex education, however, we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the statutory science curriculum. At Ryarsh we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Documents that inform the school's RSE programme include:

- Education Act 1996
- Learning and Skills Act 2000
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st Century 2014
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, September 2026)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current version)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Safeguarding Education
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

Further guidance from the DfE can be accessed by clicking on the link below:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education__Relationships_and_Sex_Education__RSE__and_Health_Education.pdf

3. Aims

Our RSE policy has been developed by the Headteacher and PSHE leader in consultation with the school governors, parents and wider community. The aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Contribute and promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our children
- Prepare them for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Teach pupils to learn the significance of healthy relationships and encourage them to develop caring, honest relationships and value others
- Promote respect for all people and comply with the Equality Act 2010, including protected characteristics
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Help children to understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships
- Be able to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and ask for help and support

4. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is embedded within our PSHCE curriculum.

We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an age appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online. The curriculum will also support pupils to recognise online risks, including inappropriate content, image sharing, online exploitation, misinformation, AI-generated content and other emerging technologies.

Our PSHE curriculum (including RSE) focuses on teaching core concepts that the children revisit during their time at Ryarsh Primary School. These core concepts are:

- Relationships (families and friendship; safe relationships; respecting ourselves and others)
- Living in the wider world (belonging in the community; media, literacy and digital resilience; money and work)
- Health and Well-being (physical health and mental well-being; growing and changing; keeping safe)

Many of 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).

In Key Stage 2 (years 3 - 6), we acknowledge that many children will begin to experience puberty at this age. We teach the children about the parts of the body and how they work. We also explain what will happen to their bodies during puberty. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it and there are opportunities for single-sex question sessions. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, and what menstruation is and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children.

Primary sex education will focus on:

- Sexual difference and naming body parts
- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- Exploring the impact of puberty on the body and the importance of physical hygiene
- Understanding that menstruation and wet dreams are a normal part of growing up
- How a baby is conceived and born, considered in the context of relationships
- Answering each other's questions about sex and relationships with confidence and knowing where to find support and advice

We use the PSHE's thematic model to build our curriculum. This document shows the specific content covered in each year group and can be found visited our school website:

Science Curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage children learn about life cycles as well as watching chicks hatch. Through ongoing personal, social and emotional development, they develop the skills to form relationships and think about relationships with others.

In Key Stage 1 (years 1 – 2) children learn:

- To identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is to do with each sense
- To notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- To find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food and air)
- To describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene

In Key Stage 2 (years 3 – 6) children learn:

- To identify that animals, including humans, need the right types and amount of nutrition, and that they cannot make their own food; they get nutrition from what they eat
- To identify that humans and some other animals have skeletons and muscles for support, protection and movement
- To describe the simple functions of the basic parts of the digestive system in humans
- To identify the different types of teeth in humans and their simple functions
- To describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals
- To describe the changes as humans develop to old age
- To identify and name the main parts of the human circulatory system, and describe the functions of the heart, blood vessels and blood
- To recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function
- To describe the way nutrients and water are transported within animals, including humans
- To recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1. Further detail can also be found in our curriculum progression document for PSHE.

5. Delivery of RSE

As part of RSE, pupils will be taught about the nature and importance of a healthy relationship for family life and bringing up children.

Either of these can include heterosexual or same-sex relationships. We ensure that no stigma is placed on children based on their home circumstances. We aim to provide accurate information and to help to develop skills to enable them to understand differences and respect themselves and others. We hope to prevent and remove prejudice. RSE should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and within society, thus preparing them for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We will work towards this aim in partnership with parents and carers.

We carry out the main RSE curriculum in PSHE lessons, however we also teach RSE through other subject areas e.g. Science, PE and RE, where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved. Linked with PE, children learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of exercise.

Since RSE incorporates the development of self-esteem and relationships, pupils' learning does not just take place through the taught curriculum but through all aspects of school life including the playground. It is important then that all staff understand they have a responsibility to implement this policy and promote the aims of the school at any time they are dealing with children.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 7).

The Headteacher also:

- Ensures appropriate consultation with parents and carers during policy review.
- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy

6.2 Staff

All 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

Staff will reply to, and answer, children's questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths' views and avoid any negative impressions.

Staff will need to answer questions that may arise through the direct teaching of sex education, as well as those that may be asked at other times. All questions will be handled sensitively and set within a general context.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher. Questions which teachers feel uncertain about answering should be discussed with a senior member of staff and answered at a later date. Consideration should be given to religious or cultural factors, and to parents' wishes before questions are answered.

6.3 Pupils

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

6.4 Parents

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. In promoting this objective we:

- Inform parents about the school's RSE policy and practice; this includes informing parents by letter or email before beginning to teach a unit of RSE
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE. However, this rarely happens as, by working in partnership with parents, they recognise the importance of this aspect of their child's education
- A register of any pupils who are removed from lessons will be kept and distributed to all teachers involved

7. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationship education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and that child will go to another class for the duration of the lesson.

8. Confidentiality and Child Protection

Staff will follow current safeguarding legislation, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and local safeguarding partnership procedures when concerns arise regarding abuse, exploitation, FGM, child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour or online harm. The school cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality where safeguarding concerns exist.

Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. We aim to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained and try to encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers to provide support. If confidentiality has to be broken, pupils are informed first and then supported by the designated teacher throughout the whole process.

9. Special Educational Needs

Pupils with special educational needs will be given the opportunity to fully participate in RSE lessons, and a differentiated program will be provided where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding.

10. Links with other policies

This policy is linked with the following policies:

- Single Equality Scheme
- Behaviour policy and procedures
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- Anti-bullying policy and procedures
- Online safety policy

11. Children with special needs

Teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of these children in order for them to have full access to the content of sex and relationship education.

12. Equal Opportunities

RSE will be given to ensure quality of access for all pupils, regardless of gender, race or disability, so giving equal opportunities and avoiding discrimination.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is the responsibility of the head teacher and teachers with responsibility for RSE.

The overall effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change, if required.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Please see below a useful document produced by the government, which provides answers to frequently asked questions:

https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education-faqs

Appendix 1 – Sequence of Learning (overview)

	Autumn: Relationships			Spring: Living in the wider world			Summer: Health and Wellbeing		
	Families and friendships	**Safe relationships**	**Respecting ourselves and others**	**Belonging to a community**	**Media literacy and digital resilience**	**Money and work**	**Physical health and Mental wellbeing**	**Growing and changing**	**Keeping safe**
Year 1	Roles of different people; families; feeling cared for	Recognising privacy; staying safe; seeking permission	How behaviour affects others; being polite and respectful	What rules are; caring for others' needs; looking after the environment	Using the internet and digital devices; communicating online	Strengths and interests; jobs in the community	Keeping healthy; food and exercise, hygiene routines; sun safety	Recognising what makes them unique and special; feelings; managing when things go wrong	How rules and age restrictions help us; keeping safe online
Year 2	Making friends; feeling lonely and getting help	Managing secrets; resisting pressure and getting help; recognising hurtful behaviour	Recognising things in common and differences; playing and working cooperatively; sharing opinions	Belonging to a group; roles and responsibilities; being the same and different in the community	The internet in everyday life; online content and information	What money is; needs and wants; looking after money	Why sleep is important; medicines and keeping healthy; keeping teeth healthy; managing feelings and asking for help	Growing older; naming body parts; moving class or year	Safety in different environments; risk and safety at home; emergencies
Year 3	What makes a family; features of family life	Personal boundaries; safely responding to others; the impact of hurtful behaviour	Recognising respectful behaviour; the importance of self-respect; courtesy and being polite	The value of rules and laws; rights, freedoms and responsibilities	How the internet is used; assessing information online	Different jobs and skills; job stereotypes; setting personal goals	Health choices and habits; what affects feelings; expressing feelings	Personal strengths and achievements; managing and reframing setbacks	Risks and hazards; safety in the local environment and unfamiliar places
Year 4	Positive friendships, including online	Responding to hurtful behaviour; managing confidentiality; recognising risks online	Respecting differences and similarities; discussing difference sensitively	What makes a community; shared responsibilities	How data is shared and used	Making decisions about money; using and keeping money safe	Maintaining a balanced lifestyle; oral hygiene and dental care	Physical and emotional changes in puberty; external genitalia; personal hygiene routines; support with puberty	Medicines and household products; drugs common to everyday life
Year 5	Managing friendships and peer influence	Physical contact and feeling safe	Responding respectfully to a wide range of people; recognising prejudice and discrimination	Protecting the environment; compassion towards others	How information online is targeted; different media types, their role and impact	Identifying job interests and aspirations; what influences career choices; workplace stereotypes	Healthy sleep habits; sun safety; medicines, vaccinations, immunisations and allergies	Personal identity; recognising individuality and different qualities; mental wellbeing	Keeping safe in different situations, including responding in emergencies, first aid and FGM
Year 6	Attraction to others; romantic relationships; civil partnership and marriage	Recognising and managing pressure; consent in different situations	Expressing opinions and respecting other points of view, including discussing topical issues	Valuing diversity; challenging discrimination and stereotypes	Evaluating media sources; sharing things online	Influences and attitudes to money; money and financial risks	What affects mental health and ways to take care of it; managing change, loss and bereavement; managing time online	Human reproduction and birth; increasing independence; managing transition	Keeping personal information safe; regulations and choices; drug use and the law; drug use and the media

A more detailed sequence of learning can be found by visiting our PSHE curriculum page: https://www.ryarsh.kent.sch.uk/Personal-Social-Health-Education/