



RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) Policy

Formally adopted by the Governing Board of:-	Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School
On:-	Sept 2024
Date of next review:-	Autumn 2025

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Policy context and rationale

This relationships and sex education policy covers the Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School approach to teaching relationships and sex education (RSE).

This policy has been subject to thorough consultation with the whole-school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, school governors and where relevant appropriate members of the wider community.

Pupil consultation has ensured that the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate RSE curriculum that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities. Consultation methods have included staff questionnaires and pupils voice from across the key stages through guided activities. Key needs identified were staying safe, looking after ourselves and growing up.

Pupil consultation has been used to inform the creation of the school's RSE curriculum and this policy where appropriate.

Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through RSE consultation events, referencing in the school prospectus or accessing a copy from the school website.

Should a hard-copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all.

The policy can be obtained in an alternative format through our school website

<http://www.fairsteadprimaryschool.co.uk>

Policy values, aims and objectives

'Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.'

'These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.'

-Secretary of State Foreword

Our school's overarching aims and objectives for pupils are to ensure children feel safe, happy and prepared for the challenges in the modern world and as they grow. RSE is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of RSE lessons. Our school values are for the children to be safe, have resilience, be a good learner and to be responsible.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. RSE equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their uniqueness and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing now and in the future.

We recognise the importance of RSE in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The overarching objective of RSE is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and provisions of The Equality Act, 2010.

Our school's vision for RSE is that in our school, it is about learning about the body, feelings, beliefs, relationships, rights and responsibilities and knowing how and when to ask for help if it is needed. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. RSE empowers children to build self-esteem, offer positive and open views and support mutual respect and celebration of self and others, providing a strong foundation to be successful in life by:

- providing a spiral curriculum, allowing for the development of knowledge relevant to the age and stage of the learner
- providing an inclusive learning environment which is safe and empowering for everyone involved based on the belief that bullying, prejudice and discrimination is unacceptable.
- teaching non-biased, accurate and factual information that is positively inclusive
- developing character skills to support healthy and safe relationships, ensuring comfortable communication about emotions, bodies and relationships and using appropriate terminology
- promoting critical awareness of differing attitudes and views presented through society, the media and peers to enable the nurturing of personal values based on respect
- providing protection from shock or guilt
- actively involving pupils as evaluators to ensure relevance
- ensuring pupils are informed of their rights, including the legal framework and how to access confidential help to keep themselves and others safe.

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. RSE will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

RSE will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes.

Principles of effective RSE

RSE provision at Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School:

- Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages.
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate).
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.

- Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Gives a positive view of human sexuality with honest and medically accurate information so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex and nurture respect for different views.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online.
- Fosters gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSE lessons and in everyday school life.
- Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Seeks pupils' views about RSE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

Entitlement and equality of opportunity

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers will include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress.

Every child will be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole-school community. RSE will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all pupils have equal access to our RSE curriculum.

We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

Thorough consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with the school's inclusion policy.

Teaching and learning

The RSE programme will be led by Mrs Castledine, taught by all teaching staff across the key stages and supported by visitors and outside agencies where appropriate.

All staff involved in the delivery of RSE have received training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches to RSE throughout their time at Fairstead Community Primary and Nursery School.

Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

On occasion external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, our school will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs).
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- Arrange for the visitor to be supervised/supported by a member of school staff at all times.
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning.

RSE will be taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including story-telling, drama, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc.

This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all pupils, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

Curriculum

The majority of elements of the RSE curriculum are a statutory requirement to teach to meet Sept 2021 Government RSHE revised guidance and The Equalities Act, 2010.

RSE will be taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that pupils will gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning.

RSE will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

Our intended RSE curriculum is detailed below but may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. If this is the case, parent/carers will be provided with appropriate notice before the amended programme is delivered. (see Appendix 1)

Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies, topic days and cross curricular links.

The curriculum, which will be taught through a spiral curriculum and age appropriate, is outlined below:

Primary

<i>Relationships Education</i>	<i>Families and people who care for me Caring friendships Respectful relationships Online relationships Being safe</i>
<i>Sex Education</i>	<i>How a baby is conceived and born</i>
<i>Health Education</i>	<i>Mental wellbeing Internet safety and harms Physical health and fitness Healthy eating Drugs, alcohol and tobacco Health and prevention Basic first aid Changing adolescent body</i>

Assessment

Pupils’ learning will be assessed at the end of every topic to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective.

Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure and will include self-assessment tasks that will confirm pupils understanding of the topics. Lessons and assessments will be recorded in class floor books. Evidence may include photos, pupil voice and self-assessments.

The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with pupils and parents as appropriate.

The quality of RSE teaching and learning will be monitored through RSE learning walks, team teaching, floor book study with pupils and informal drop-ins conducted by the subject lead and/or members of the senior leadership team.

The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training needs.

Responding to pupils' questions

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of RSE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture.

We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

At the end of every lesson, pupils will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions in an open setting and will also be provided with an opportunity to raise anonymous questions through the use of an anonymous 'ask-it-basket'. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson.

Teachers may delay answering a pupil's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer.

Teachers can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices.

If a teacher does not answer a question, the pupil will have the reasons clearly explained and the teacher will work with the pupil to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the pupil to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

Confidentiality, signposting and handling disclosures

The school's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the beginning of RSE teaching the class will discuss and create a 'working agreement'.

Confidentiality will be included within this agreement so pupils are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within RSE avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes RSE more accessible to all pupils including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Teachers will signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Teachers will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on topic coverage so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

Teachers will conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection.

Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns.

The designated safeguarding lead will then deal with the matter in line with our school's safeguarding policy.

Involving parents and carers

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in RSE and that RSE is most effective when it is collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The school will provide support to parents and carers through an annual workshop which provides a valuable opportunity to develop awareness of emerging RSE topics, meet the RSE lead and review the resources being used as well as consider ways to build on the learning at home, fostering strong channels of communication between parents/carers and their children.

The school also operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss RSE at relevant times throughout the school year.

The vast majority of RSE is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education. As a maintained primary school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for Science.

If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all of the non-statutory Sex Education, they should discuss this with the headteacher, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The head teacher will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, parents/carers must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn. (Appendix 2)

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, our school will respect a parent/carers' request to have their child excused from non-statutory sex education up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education, rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The school will document this process.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Links to other school policies and curriculum

This policy complements the following policies:

Anti-bullying

Relationships and Behaviour Policy

Online safety

Equality

Inclusion

Safeguarding

Teaching and Learning

Review date

The governing body monitors the impact of RSE on an annual basis. The governors give serious consideration to any comments, consultation and evidence of impact.

Consultation with pupils will be conducted on a regular basis to support with reviewing the curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs and the policy updated accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed every year or sooner if the RSE curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing pupil needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance. The next review date of this policy is currently set for Autumn 2025.

Appendix 1

By the end of primary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability• The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives• That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care• That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up• That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong• How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends• The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties• That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded• That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right• How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • 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 those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2

Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE



TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
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			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	