



# Pitsford School

## School Policy Document

**Name of Policy:** Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

**Audience:** Public

**Date for Next Review:** Autumn 2025

**SLT Member(s) Responsible for Reviewing and Updating the Policy:** FMK

Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary schools. This Policy sets out our response to the Government Guidance: 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers'

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1019542/Relationships\\_Education\\_Relationships\\_and\\_Sex\\_Education\\_RSE\\_and\\_Health\\_Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1019542/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

It should be read in conjunction with our PSHE policy, Safeguarding and Anti-Bullying policy.

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## **1. Definition of RE / RSE**

There is no definitive definition as such. The Government guidance sets out what pupils need to know: Relationship Education is based on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. Relationship Education is compulsory. As children get older appropriate learning about the bodies physical changes, body image and gender will be included along with recognition that children will be questioning romantic relationships. In the transition years and KS3 there is an increasing focus on puberty, different kinds of relationships and on building the skills for recognising and developing healthy relationships. We also aim throughout to engage pupils in learning about keeping themselves safe and keeping healthy.

## **2. Provision and Responsibility – Progression between phases:**

In the senior school the Head of PSHE/RSE is the Deputy Head Pastoral. In the Junior School, the PSHE/RSE curriculum is under the oversight of the Head of Juniors. A designated teacher in the Junior School plans and delivers the curriculum. In the Senior School, The Head of Sixth Form plans and delivers the curriculum with support from the tutors.

## **3. How RSE is monitored, evaluated and reviewed**

We use the PSHE Association course builder tools to build our programmes of PSHE and RSE. We include pupils, parents, teachers and the Safeguarding Governor in the review of this curriculum. Monitoring is done through learning walks, drop ins, talking to the pupils through pupil voice, checking books, folders and outcomes and through short lesson observations.

## **4. Parents' right to withdrawal**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. If a parents wishes to withdraw a child they should request this in writing and we will invite parents in to discuss with the Head, Deputy or Head of Juniors, and, if appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. We will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

In the Senior School, once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, 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, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

In the Junior School we will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education, other than as part of the science curriculum.



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## **5. The aims of RSE in the school and links to PSHE Policy and other areas of curriculum**

Our guiding principles are that all material and topics must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law. We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. As a school, we are here to complement and reinforce this role and build on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education.

## **6. Choice of resources including any external visitors contributing to the RSE programme**

We are members of the PSHE association and benefit from using their resources and guidance which has been quality assessed. Other resources are also used within the framework below:

This framework gives advice on age appropriate topics and came out of consultation and guidance commissioned by Leicestershire Healthy Schools, Public Health, Leicestershire County Council.

Our programme of study builds on this as a starting point, but also aims to take into consideration the views of our pupils, parents and staff. We are also mindful of the need to adapt and be proactive to the challenges that are current in society. The 'Me Too' campaign and the 'Everyone's Invited' website have caused us to re-evaluate our effectiveness as a school in being a source of prevention and intervention – a safe place for pupils to get help and advice and report if necessary.

### **Age 3–6**

At this age children are interested in the differences between boys and girls, naming body parts, where babies come from, and friends and family. What areas of the body are private and should not be touched and who they can talk to if they are worried are also important.

### **Age 7–8**

At this age children are interested in the emotional and physical changes of growing up, similarities and differences between each other and between boys and girls, coping with strong emotions and how babies are made from eggs and sperm. How to look after our bodies and how to be safe and healthy are also important.

### **Age 9–10**

At this age children are interested in knowing about love and the different kinds of families and will be more aware of different types of partnerships and relationships. Gender stereotypes and homophobia can be explained and challenged. They will be curious about puberty and sexual feelings and changing body image. They will want more details about



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conception, how babies develop and are born and why families are important for having babies.

They will also be interested in knowing about how people can get diseases, including HIV, from sex and how they can be prevented. They will also want to know who they can talk to if they want help or advice and information about growing up and personal safety including online.

## **Age 11–13**

Most young people will be going through puberty and will be interested in hormones, how they will be affected by them, the menstrual cycle, wet dreams, erections, fertility, pregnancy – how it can be avoided, and safer sex. They may also be wondering if their physical development is 'normal'.

Young teens also want to know about the difference between sexual attraction and love and whether it is usual to be attracted or in love with someone of the same sex. Young people will be asking questions about relationships, when is the right time to have sex, how to avoid pressure, and where they can get more information if they need it, including the best websites. Identifying how prejudice operates and being able to play a part in stopping prejudice based on gender identity and sexual orientation is also important.

## **Age 14–16**

At this age young people want to know about different types of relationships. They may want to know about how to cope with strong feelings and how to cope with the pressures to have sex. They will be interested to know what they should expect of a partner and how to talk to them. They will need more information on contraception, sexual health and how to access services. They may ask questions about parenthood and may like to know how they can talk to their own parents or a trusted adult. Most young people will not have sexual intercourse until they are at least 16 but statistics show that about a quarter of young people will have had sexual intercourse by the time they are 16.

Learning about sex and relationships is a life-long process and the transition from secondary school to sixth form or further education can be a very significant time in terms of young people's personal development and relationships. Most young people first have sex aged 16 or above, and experiences of non-volitional sex (sex against someone's will) are particularly prevalent in the 16–18 age-group (Macdowall, 2013). It is therefore very important that SRE continues post-16.

## **Age 16+**

At this age young people are at the legal age of consent and many, but not all, will be in intimate relationships and will be interested to know about the challenges of long-term commitments and the qualities needed for successful loving relationships. They will be interested in what issues can be difficult to talk about in intimate relationships, for example sexual pleasure and contraception and how this can be addressed.



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They will be interested to know more about being gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. Young people at this age will need more information on sexual risk, pregnancy, sexual health, fertility and infertility. They will be keen to discuss gender stereotyping, violence, exploitation, the law, and discrimination. Learning about the relationship between self-esteem and body image and how to challenge negative messages from peers, the media and society is also important.

As with any visitor, Pitsford School is responsible for checking the visiting organisation's credentials. We will discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils. We will ask to see the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, so we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs). It is important to 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 policy.

## **7. Teachers , Training and Timetabling**

In the Junior School relationship education is part of the PSHE programme and is taught mainly by a dedicated PSHE coordinator/ class teacher.

In the Senior School RSE is part of PSHE. It is taught in two 25 minute sessions a week by the form tutor.

In both schools, members of SLT and other teaching staff contribute to assemblies and other forms of PSHE.

Training happens through a variety of INSET, staff briefings and regular tutor meetings which are exclusive to preparation for PSHE sessions and pastoral matters regarding tutees.

## **8. Assessment**

Pupils each have a PSHE folder which will be regularly reviewed, but most assessment is in terms of tutor verbal feedback and other soft forms of assessment. Survey tools are used as Self-assessment which also serves to inform our planning for future teaching.

Junior School use age appropriate assessment including floor maps and Tapestry.

## **9. Teaching strategies, terminology and language used in RSE.**

Good practice involves setting of ground rules, using distancing techniques, and considering how questions can be asked. We will promote positive strategies by tackling myths, exploring social norms and exploring empowering tools and help seeking tools.

PSHE teachers will avoid using shock or fear tactics and will not attempt to instruct or inspire pupils in particular behaviours or practices. Neither will personal examples be used.



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Language will remain professional and respectful as per our staff code of conduct. With SRE the correct medical vocabulary for parts of the body will be used throughout.

## **10. Pupil and parent consultation.**

Our Parent consultation is in its infancy, but we have established a small group of parents who are keen to meet and be involved in matters relating to pastoral care and aim to update this part of the policy before the end of the year.

Pupils and parents will be invited to contribute to a survey once a year, any parent can contact the Tutor, Deputy Head or Head of Juniors or Head of Sixth Form and we will talk to small groups of pupils through Pupil Voice.

## **11. Inclusivity and the equalities duties**

Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects. Our curriculum and training focus is designed and delivered with inclusivity in mind.

## **12. Dealing with disclosures; links to other relevant school policies.**

The sensitive nature of topics covered in an RSE lesson mean that it is always possible and indeed, likely that concerns will be raised and we will ensure that pupils know that they can do this. Teachers are all safeguarding trained and must follow the processes for disclosure as outlined in Section 3 of the Safeguarding Policy. Teachers will also be familiar with the other policies surrounding the safety of a child: the anti-bullying policies, online safety policy and staff code of conduct. Pupils are regularly reminded in assemblies about the adults in school who are there to keep them safe, to listen and the help them. Our Sixth Form mentors are also trained in basic safeguarding and how to deal with a disclosure.

### **Good Practice includes:**

- Always listen and take the child seriously;
- Do not promise confidentiality;
- Never ask leading questions;
- Accept your own limitations and explain that you need to talk to someone else about this;
- Reassure the child that it is not his/her fault;
- Avoid showing personal feelings;
- Avoid making promises which you cannot keep;



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- Make it clear that whatever happens, the School Staff will be there to offer support;
- Make sure that you know the School procedures.

As per all safeguarding observations or disclosure, some support may be necessary. See Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy/ Safeguarding policy.