

Relationships and Sex Education

POLICY STATEMENT

- At The Grange School, we hold the view that Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is vital for the personal, social, and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills, and values they need to have safe, respectful, and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing.
- All pupils have a right to holistic, inclusive, and needs led RSE and through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.
- Article 29 – Children should have an education that is directed to the development of the child’s personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities.

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1. Aims and Objectives

- 1.1.1 *'The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.'* - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.25)
- 1.1.2 At The Grange School, we use a gender equity and human rights framework for RSE. We take a positive, inclusive, and affirmative approach that accepts pupils' experiences and enables them to be explored sensitively.
- 1.1.3 To meet the aims outlined in the DfE Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance, we equip our pupils to build positive relationships on and offline. We seek to ensure our curriculum gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that will help them to:
- value their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity.
 - build self-esteem and self-worth.
 - accept and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others.
 - understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world.
 - around them
 - manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions.
 - consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others.
 - develop as informed and responsible citizens.
 - understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.
- 1.1.4 High quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- 1.1.5 We aim to provide our pupils with an age appropriate RSE programme that is tailored to their physical and emotional maturity. It should enable them to make positive choices about their sexual and emotional health, both now and in the future.

2. Scope

2.1 Equality, Inclusion and Social Justice

- 2.1.1 ‘Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls; and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole school approach.’ - Department for Education (2019, p.14)
- 2.1.2 RSE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion, and social justice. Our RSE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes, sexism, and sexual harassment in school. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum.
- 2.1.3 We are also committed to RSE that is relevant to every pupil and makes them feel valued and included. This means we are committed to inclusion for all pupils and are mindful of this when planning for this subject, ensuring that we consider the gender, religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSE. Inclusive RSE at The Grange School will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

2.2 Subject Content

- 2.2.1 At The Grange School, we teach to the learning objectives and content outlined in the DfE Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance. All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils, including those pupils with SEND. We ensure that RSE is carefully planned and primarily delivered through our PSHE curriculum which is given a high priority and timetabled twice a week for all phases, with a minimum total requirement of 1 hour.
- 2.2.2 Some aspects of RSE feature across several topics, yet discrete RSE topics are also planned and delivered, considering the timing of this as related to the age and emotional maturity of our pupils. Additional teaching may also take place within assemblies, Science lessons, RE lessons and other areas of the curriculum, but these will be part of our carefully planned approach to RSE and not simply an ‘add-on’.
- 2.2.3 Through effective organisation and delivery of RSE, we ensure that:
- RSE is delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual, and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Approaches such as distancing techniques and use of classroom question boxes will allow pupils to raise issues or ask questions which they may find embarrassing.
 - pupils’ views are listened to and that teachers encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Ground rules will be developed and shared with pupils as part of best practice. Ground rules help to ensure discussions and personal questions/comments are managed appropriately and sensitively, along with those questions which are more challenging.

- core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size and that taught content provides opportunities to revisit previous content to allow clear progression. As such, topics and lessons have been carefully sequenced, within a planned scheme of work. Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations. The curriculum proactively addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupils' development as well as their age. All resources will be selected carefully – inappropriate/illegal images and videos will not be used in any circumstances and all related school policies will be followed.
- groupings will be carefully considered by teachers and senior leaders (including the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate) - some classes may be taught in gender specific groups, on a one-to-one basis or within a whole class setting - dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, the cultural, religious, or personal background of pupils, their age and SEND.
- care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of any pupil based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them, e.g., children in care or young carers. There is an awareness that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and appropriate actions will be taken to mitigate this.
- there is a balance between teaching pupils about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online), whilst being clear it is never the fault of any child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong.
- we recognise that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity and all pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and explored at a timely point, in a clear, sensitive, and respectful manner. Content related to LGBTQIA+ is fully integrated into a range of topics, rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. There is a focus on challenging perceived derogatory views about the legally protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- steps are taken to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other protected characteristic. There is awareness of issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia, gender stereotypes, sexual violence, and harassment, with positive action taken to build a school culture within which these are not tolerated. Awareness of the issues of sexting and youth produced sexual imagery are not taught in isolation and instead are taught as part of a developmental PSHE programme.

2.3 Subject Delivery

- 2.3.1 ‘Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme or lessons.’ - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.8)
- 2.3.2 RSE will be delivered at The Grange School as part of our PSHE curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all phases, using a spiral curriculum approach - a course of study in which pupils will see the same topics throughout their school career, with each encounter increasing in complexity and reinforcing previous learning.
- 2.3.3 Teachers will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas, e.g., Science, Computing and PE, to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSE. We also supplement learning using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom. For example, Circle Time, Art, Science, School celebrations and events as part of the ‘Global Citizens’ curriculum.
- 2.3.4 RSE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We will not artificially separate learning about real life and online relationships when it is appropriate to integrate this teaching and explore a topic in both contexts. Where an issue is experienced exclusively or disproportionately in an online context, this will be drawn out. We also use external agencies, where appropriate, to deliver aspects of RSE (see ‘Working with visitors and external agencies’ section below).
- 2.3.5 The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate, e.g., for external body parts. Teachers will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme. All team members who have responsibility for delivering RSE will undergo training on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date with the RSE policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE. In addition to ongoing training, CPD will also be scheduled in response to updates to our RSE units of learning and any new development in terms of course content.

3. Monitoring and Evaluation

3.1 Process

3.1.1 ‘Schools should have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils’ work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas.’ - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.43)

3.1.2 At The Grange School, we regularly monitor and evaluate our RSE units of learning to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the curriculum is meeting the new national requirements and that learning outcomes are reflective of pupil need. This policy will be reviewed by the school’s leadership team in conjunction with the Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, team members, parents/carers and pupils will be consulted, and any amendments clearly communicated.

3.1.3 The school’s leadership team monitors and evaluates the implementation of the programme and pupils’ knowledge and understanding through:

- pupil voice, e.g., using pupil interviews, questionnaires/ surveys, focus groups or using pupil question boxes.
- evidence from lesson observations / Teacher evaluation of lessons and the overall RSE programme
- looking at samples of pupils’ work / project work / pupils’ pre and post unit self-evaluation / reflective pupil logbooks
- analysis of behaviour incident records, e.g., prejudicial bullying
- analysing pupil engagement in lessons

3.2 Pupil Voice

3.2.1 ‘Listening and responding to the views of young people will strengthen the policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of all pupils. - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.12)

3.2.2 Pupil voice is central to the culture and ethos of our school. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSE is to children’s lives. Throughout our RSE units of learning, we embed pupil voice practices to enable pupils to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives, and take a broader view.

3.2.3 We want to ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive, or exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed appropriately and without delay. We want to ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion, and diversity are promoted.

3.3 Answering Pupil Questions

3.3.1 ‘The school’s policy should cover how the school handles [difficult] questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.’ - Department for Education (2019, p.23)

- 3.3.2 RSE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies, and relationships with others. To ensure pupils have every opportunity to ask any question they might have and to avoid loss of dignity for all, school team members may offer pupils the chance to contribute questions anonymously in advance of specific lessons, e.g., on puberty. This will enable team members to research questions and respond with factually accurate information.
- 3.3.3 As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. If team members do not feel in position to immediately address questions, they may defer a question and seek more information before responding to pupils. Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and take into consideration whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. If team members have concerns about pupil contributions or questions, they will inform parents/carers as appropriate. Team members will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their pupils that could make either party feel vulnerable.
- 3.3.4 An open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older pupils. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in RSE. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm when they can discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

4. Working with Parents/Carers

4.1 Key Points

- 4.1.1 'All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when.' - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.17)
- 4.1.2 'All schools must have in place a written policy for RSE. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy.' - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.11)
- 4.1.3 Successful teaching of RSE involves parents/carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/carers can play an important role in the RSE of their children through exploring discussions that have taken place in school at home.
- 4.1.4 If parents/carers have any concerns or special circumstances that the school should be aware of, or would like any further information about the curriculum, we can designate a time for them to come into school and address any issues.
- 4.1.5 We may share examples of key resources we use with parents/carers to reassure them of the content and to enable them to continue the conversations started in class at home. If parents/carers wish to view resources, this can be arranged via the school office.

4.2 Parental Right to Request Their Child be Excused from Sex Education

- 4.2.1 'All schools should work closely with parents and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.' - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.17)
- 4.2.2 As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE. Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the science curriculum. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.
- 4.2.3 All young people have the right to opt into sex education three terms before they turn 16. In practice, this means young people have the right to be taught sex education (if they wish) on turning 15. For those who do opt in, the school will make arrangements for this to happen.
- 4.2.4 Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social, and physical wellbeing, and for promoting equality and social justice.
- 4.2.5 Should a parent/carer decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the Head Teacher to discuss their concerns. The Head Teacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum. If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the Head Teacher in writing and the school will keep a record of this.

4.2.6 Except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents’/carers’ request to withdraw their 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, the school will plan to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. As RSE is an important part of our curriculum, it is hoped that all pupils will participate in all aspects of these lessons. However, the school acknowledges the legal rights of parents/carers as described below:

- From September 2020, parents of both primary and secondary-aged pupils will not be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty). Parents of both primary and secondary-aged pupils will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of the National Curriculum for Science, which includes subject content such as the names of external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age, reproduction/offspring in some plants and animals, reproduction in humans and plants, hormones in reproduction, hormone and non-hormone methods of contraception, and communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans.
- Parents will be able to withdraw their child, following discussion with the school and providing notification to the Headteacher in writing, from any or all aspects of Sex Education - other than those as listed above - up to and until three terms before the age of 16. In line with the statutory guidance, where pupils are withdrawn from Sex Education, we will keep a record of this, including discussions/requests from parents/carers, and we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- In line with the statutory guidance, if any secondary-aged pupil wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the pupil with Sex Education during one of the three terms before the age of 16. At Post 16, we will continue to offer Sex Education to our pupils as part of their non-qualification activities linked to the development of character, broader skills, attitudes, and confidence, and in preparation for transition to life beyond school. Parents/carers will not have the right to withdraw pupils from this.

4.2.7 The information above is based on the Relationships, RSE and Health Education guidance that became statutory from September 2020. For more information please see: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

5. Working with Visitors and External Agencies

- 5.1.1 'Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people 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 school policy.' - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.18)
- 5.1.2 From time-to-time The Grange School may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE scheme of work. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. A team member will always be present throughout these lessons to build on pupils' learning after the session(s) as well as to answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have.
- 5.1.3 Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy. We will ensure that there is appropriate planning, preparation and follow up work for the session. We will also ensure that the visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics. They will also be made aware of any specific issues relating to child protection.

6. Safeguarding and Child Protection

- 6.1.1 'At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports.' - [Department for Education](#) (2019, p.42)
- 6.1.2 The Grange School acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- 6.1.3 RSE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse or have experienced abuse.
- 6.1.4 We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all team members have statutory training around child protection and will follow the school's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- 6.1.5 We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns, or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.
- 6.1.6 While The Grange School wants to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy. We do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where rights respecting ground rules are created with pupils on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all.
- 6.1.7 Once ground rules have been set, we will check they are in place throughout the unit of learning and actively referred to. By using ground rules and other approaches, such as distancing techniques, we believe the school can create a supportive environment for discussions that can be sensitive or difficult.