

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Reddish Vale High School



Reviewed – February 2025

Agreed by SLT – February 2025

Agreed by Governors – May 2025

1. Purpose

We believe that Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) should contribute to promoting the social, moral, spiritual, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and of society, preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. We also believe that RSE should be taught within a climate of trust, respect and appropriate confidentiality in which pupils and adults feel able to talk openly and honestly.

RSE is comprised of learning about positive and negative relationships, different models of families and individual sexuality; this is in addition to the relationships education where we teach about sex and sexual health.

Effective RSE is important to ensure that children grow up able to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding, lasting and responsible relationships and to be informed and comfortable with the changes during puberty, be sexually healthy and emotionally safe. Its purpose is to give young people the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need in order to make responsible decisions about their life, to learn to respect themselves and others and to move with confidence from childhood into adolescence and adulthood.

RSE is designed to help pupils discuss and deal with difficult social and moral situations that they may encounter in the present or in later life. It will help them to make considered choices and to be better able to resist social pressures in relationships. It will enable them to recognise how their own behaviour could inappropriately create pressures on others and to educate them to avoid doing so.

2. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

3. What is effective Relationships and Sex Education?

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of a stable and loving relationship. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health as well as preparing pupils at school for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity. Our curriculum is also designed to support children growing up in an increasingly complex and digital world. Whilst the internet is an overwhelmingly positive development in our lives, it does present significant challenges, particularly for young people. With the increasing dominance of social media, the prevalence of cyber-bullying and the risk that children learn about relationships from untrustworthy sources, it is the aim of RSE at Reddish Vale to support children to make the right decisions and keep themselves safe and happy.

3.1 Attitudes and values

Pupils are helped to examine the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships. They are also encouraged to explore and consider moral dilemmas. RSE can also help pupils to develop a good self-image and high self-esteem, responsibility and the ability to make informed decisions.

3.2 Personal and social skills

RSE encourages pupils to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively whilst developing self-respect and empathy for others. Pupils are taught to make choices based on an understanding of difference, with an absence of prejudice and learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse. It also provides opportunities to develop communication skills and assertiveness within a range of different situations.

3.3 Knowledge and understanding

RSE focuses on understanding physical development at appropriate stages. The pupils will explore: human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships. Pupils will also be provided with information on contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice support services.

Pupils will look at the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay and the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

This will provide an objective, factual and balanced view of sexual matters, correcting any misconceptions and misinformation pupils may have gained.

4. Aims

The aims of the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy is to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

Through the RSE programmes of study pupils should:

- Be able to understand and accept themselves and others, regardless of race, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, culture, disability, faith or age
- Be encouraged to accept and celebrate differences. Pupils will be given the knowledge and skills to prevent prejudice and to challenge it where it occurs
- Develop the confidence, self-awareness and self-esteem to make their own decisions with regards to positive, healthy, mature relationships and life choices and to resist peer pressure
- Develop communication and decision-making skills so that they are effectively able to manage their own relationships
- Understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits of this
- Develop knowledge of how the law applies to sexual relationships
- Develop an understanding, appropriate to their level of maturity and developmental needs, of sexual and physical relationships
- Understand appropriate and inappropriate, controlling, exploitative or abusive behaviour within any relationship, in order to reduce its incidence and to build confidence to deal with it if it occurs, seeking to reduce violence
- Have the opportunity to ask questions confidentially or without embarrassment and seek answers to questions about emotional or physical relationships
- Know where to turn for advice
- Understand issues around sexual activity and safe physical relationships
- Understand the value of stable, loving and caring long-term relationships, as key building blocks of society and as providing a strong basis for bringing up children. Pupils will be appreciative of marriage, civil partnerships, family life and the implications of parenthood, recognising also that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage
- Value all relationships, understand that the school is fully inclusive, encourages mutual respect and celebrates diversity and that it is not in keeping with the ethos of our school that any young person is stigmatised on the grounds of their own family background or circumstances
- Have an accurate understanding of contraception and of the risks of sexually transmitted infections, unwanted pregnancy, abortion, sexually transmitted diseases, sexuality and emotional and physical development. Pupils will be given the opportunity to discuss openly without prejudice or influence by teachers or facilitators
- Instill a respect for the cultural and religious influences on individual sexuality and respect individual differences including those relating to cultural, religious, ethnic and family backgrounds. To promote those values of respect and dignity for human life and commitment, trust, love and honesty within relationships which are common to all faiths and societies

5. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum and supplemented through PSHE drop down days, assemblies and tutor based activities as appropriate. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum, and other aspects are explored in GCSE Religious Studies and BTEC Health and Social Care.

School also recognises that some aspects of RSE must be taught by specialists. From time to time we will invite professional health experts into school to deliver RSE topics. Pupils may also receive elements of their RSE through other external professionals and other voluntary organisations.

Across all key stages, pupils will be supported with developing the following skills within the context of family life:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

6. Dealing with Sensitive Issues

All teachers are given training on handling controversial topics, are made clear about confidentiality boundaries and know where/who to refer pupils to for confidential advice and support.

RSE is part of the school's provision for personal development. The following are protocols for discussion based lessons with students:

- No one (teacher or pupil) will have to answer a personal question
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way
- Teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say that the appropriate person to answer that question is the parent/carer
- Teachers' personal beliefs and attitudes will not influence their teaching of RSE
- If at any point a disclosure is made by a pupil it is the responsibility of the member of staff to follow the schools' safeguarding policy and notify the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

7. Inclusion

7.1 Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will ensure appropriateness is considered in our delivery and respond to parental requests and concerns as appropriate.

7.2 Pupils with Additional Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive Relationships and Sex Education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

7.3 Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We will deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that Relationships and Sex Education is relevant to them. The needs and rights of all pupils including LGBT pupils are upheld. The curriculum content around LGBT is introduced at age appropriate points and is integrated across the curriculum and not delivered as stand-alone/isolated lessons.

8. Statutory requirements

From September 2020 all secondary schools are required to deliver RSE. The government have also committed to statutory health education, meaning the majority of Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education will be compulsory from 2020.

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect and love and care for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. RSE fits in with our whole school ethos and promotes respect for self and others. At Reddish Vale High School we believe that with a growth mind-set all our pupils will be able to make positive life choices and decisions which will be beneficial to their overall wellbeing.

At Reddish Vale High School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy. Our policy is based upon the DfE statutory PSHE curriculum to be implemented from September 2020. The content of our RSE lessons is based upon the PSHE association's Programme of Study for PSHE Education (Appendix 1). We will respond to the outcomes of the 2023 Independent Review and 2024 consultation of RSHE once published.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body will review and approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

9.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has a responsibility to ensure that opportunities exist for teachers to participate in in-service training in order to gain the confidence, insight and personal skills needed to deliver and support the programme of sex education and to review the policy at regular intervals.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the sex education components of RSE.

9.3 Staff

All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of the physical, moral and spiritual wellbeing of their pupils. All teachers should ensure that their personal attitudes, opinions or beliefs do not unduly influence the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education and ensure that teaching materials are appropriate to the age and cultural background of the pupils concerned. All teachers should receive appropriate training and have a developed understanding of when to counsel in matters discussed in PSHE/SMSC and when and how to refer for specialist counselling and support. All teachers should request support where necessary, which may include understanding RSE content and developing their delivery of sessions.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Referring withdrawal requests in line with the RSE policy

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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.

9.4 Pupils

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

10. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/Carers are key people in teaching their children about Relationships and Sex and maintaining the culture and ethos of the family, helping children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings. Reddish Vale respects the religious and ethical beliefs of pupils and their parents.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. This can be requested 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.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education. There

is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education.

11. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their continuing professional development.

The Headteacher / Personal Development lead will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as School Nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE lead and Senior Leadership Team through:

- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny activities
- Pupil voice activities

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

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE lead annually or as required by law. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher and the governing board.

13. Policy development

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

1. Review – The PSHE lead reviewed and amended the current RSE policy to work in line with the new compulsory PSHE curriculum (to be fully implemented by 2020, but operational from September 2019).
2. Senior Leadership Team – Headteacher and Deputy Head reviewed the proposed document with the PSHE lead.
3. Parent consultation – The reviewed curriculum was presented at the Parents' Forum, and parents were provided with the opportunity to make amendments and adjustments to the policy.
4. LA consultation – The reviewed curriculum was presented to the LA PSHE lead.
5. Governors consultation – The draft document was presented to the Governing Body in May 2019.

6. Pupil consultation – We investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE through a pupil voice activity
7. Ratification – once all amendments were made, the policy was shared again with Governors and ratified.

14. Links with other policies and documentation

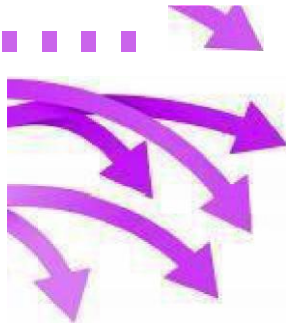
This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- SEN policy and information report
- PSHE Curriculum Intent
- Equality information and objectives

15. Legislation and guidance

This policy reflects the requirements of:

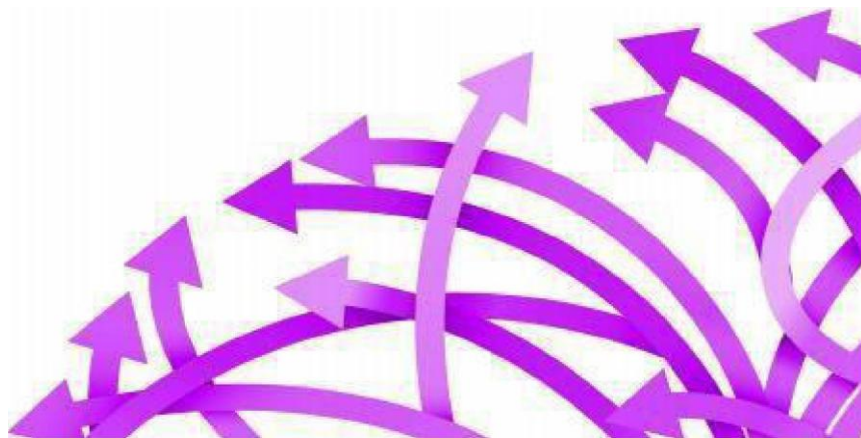
- National Curriculum programmes of study,
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014
- Statutory Guidance - Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)
- Equality Act 2010
- Governance Handbook
- Academies Act 2010
- PSHE Association recommended Programme of study



We've got it covered..

Mapping the PSHE Association Programme of Study to the new statutory guidance on Health Education and Relationships Education/RSE

Updated July 2019



Key stages 3 and 4

KS3: Health and Wellbeing

- H2. to recognise that the way in which personal qualities, attitudes, skills and achievements are evaluated by others, affects confidence and self-esteem
- H3. to accept helpful feedback or reject unhelpful criticism
- H8. the risks and myths associated with female genital mutilation (FGM), its status as a criminal act and strategies to access sources of support for themselves or their peers who they believe may be at risk, or who may have already been subject to FGM
- H11. about the use of contraception, including the condom and pill; to negotiate condom use
- H14. to recognise and manage what influences their choices about exercise
- H19. that identity is affected by a range of factors, including the media and a positive sense of self
- H20. ways of recognising and reducing risk, minimising harm and strategies for getting help in emergency and risky situations
- H21. to understand how the inappropriate use of mobile phones can contribute to accidents
- H23. to understand and manage risk within the context of personal safety, especially accident prevention and road and cycle safety (through the Bikeability programme)
- H24. the positive (for example the treatment or eradication of disease) and negative (for example dependency) roles played by drugs in society (including alcohol)
- H27. to recognise and strategies to manage different influences (including peer influence) on their decisions about the use of substances, (including clarifying and challenging their own perceptions, values and beliefs)

KS4: Health and Wellbeing

- H1. to evaluate the extent to which their self-confidence and self-esteem are affected by the judgments of others and ways of managing this
- H5. (reinforcing and building on key stage 3 learning) to recognise and manage the triggers (for themselves or their friends) for unhealthy coping strategies, such as self-harm and eating disorders; how to recognise when they or others need help, sources of help and strategies for accessing it [NB The use of teaching activities, visiting speakers or lesson materials that provide detail on ways of self-harming, restricting food/inducing vomiting, hiding self-harm or disordered eating from others

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- etc., or that might provide a role model or inspiration for vulnerable pupils (e.g. personal accounts of the 'benefits' someone experienced from their selfharm/disordered eating, their weight change etc.) can be harmful and should always be avoided]
- H8. how lifestyle choices affect a developing foetus
- H9. about STIs, including HIV/AIDS, how to protect themselves and others from infection and how to respond if they feel they or others are at risk
- H11. to assess and manage risks associated with cosmetic and aesthetic procedures, including tattooing, piercings, the use of sun lamps and tanning salons

H12. how to recognise and follow health and safety procedures

H16. understand the terms 'habit', 'dependence' and 'addiction' in relation to substance use and where and how to access support if they have concerns

H17. the wider risks and consequences of legal and illegal substance use, including on their personal safety, future career, relationships and future lifestyle

KS3: Relationships

R3. to further develop the communication skills of active listening, negotiation, offering and receiving constructive feedback and assertiveness

R4. to explore the range of positive qualities people bring to relationships

R6. the features of positive and stable relationships (including trust, mutual respect, honesty, equality) and those of unhealthy relationships (including imbalance of power, coercion, control, exploitation, abuse of any kind)

R7. that the media portrayal of relationships may not reflect real life and the possible impact of this on people's expectations of relationships

R12. how to manage or deal with the breakdown of a relationship and the effects of change, including loss, separation, divorce and bereavement

R13. to understand the importance of friendship and to begin to consider love and sexual relationships in this context

R14. to understand what expectations might be of having a girl/boyfriend

R18. that consent is freely given and that being pressurised, manipulated or coerced to agree to something is not consent; that the seeker of consent is responsible for ensuring that consent has been given and if consent is not given or is withdrawn, that decision should always be respected

R22. about the risks related to unprotected sex, which could include exploring the consequences of unintended pregnancy and the options available in such circumstances

R24. about the difference between assigned/biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation

R25. to recognise that there is diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality

R26. the terms associated with sex, gender identity and sexual orientation and to understand accepted terminology

R31. to understand the feelings and pressure that the need for peer approval can generate, including in relation to the purchase and use of tobacco and alcohol (including cheap/illicit alcohol and cigarettes), drugs and other risky behaviours

R32. to understand the terms 'habit', 'dependence' and 'addiction' in a wide variety of contexts (including substance use and information technology) and where and how to access support if they have concerns

R33. laws relating to the 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

R34. about the difference between friendship groups and gangs (including the risks posed by membership of gangs on individuals, families and communities); strategies for managing pressure to join a particular group or gang and how to access appropriate support

R37. how to manage any request or pressure to share an image of themselves or of others; who to

talk to if they have concerns

KS4: Relationships

R1. strategies to manage strong emotions and feelings

R6. managing changes in personal relationships including the ending of relationships

R10. the impact of separation, divorce and bereavement on families and the need to adapt to changing circumstances

R11. about statutory and voluntary organisations that support relationships experiencing difficulties or in crisis, such as relationship breakdown, separation, divorce, or bereavement

R12. how to access such organisations and other sources of information, advice and support

R13. about diversity in sexual attraction and developing sexuality, including sources of support and reassurance and how to access them

R16. to recognise when others are using manipulation, persuasion or coercion and how to respond

R17. to understand the pernicious influence of gender double standards and victim-blaming

R23. to understand the consequences of unintended pregnancy and of teenage parenthood (in the context of learning about parenting skills and qualities and their importance to family life)

R28. about the options open to people who are not able to conceive

R29. the role peers can play in supporting one another (including helping vulnerable friends to access reliable, accurate and appropriate support)

KS3: Living in the Wider World

L1. to recognise, clarify and if necessary challenge their own core values and how their values influence their choices

L4. strategies for safely challenging stereotyping, prejudice, bigotry, bullying, and discrimination when they witness or experience it in their daily lives

L5. about the potential tensions between human rights, British law and cultural and religious expectations and practices

L6. about the primacy of human rights; and how to safely access sources of support for themselves or their peers if they have concerns or fears about those rights being undermined or ignored

L8. about their own identity as a learner, preferred style of learning and to develop study, organisational, research and presentation skills

L9. to identify own strengths, interests, skills and qualities as part of the personal review and planning process, including their value to future employability and strategies for further developing them

L10. different types of work, including employment, self-employment and voluntary work; that everyone has a 'career' which is their pathway through life, education and work

L11. about the laws and by-laws relating to young people's permitted hours and types of employment and how to minimise health and safety risks

L12. about different work roles and career pathways, including clarifying their own early aspirations

L13. about the labour market (including the diversity of local and national employment opportunities and about self-employment); about learning options, skills, occupations and progression routes

L14. about the choices available to them at the end of Key Stage 3, sources of information, advice and support, and the skills to manage this decision-making process

L15. the benefits of being ambitious and enterprising in all aspects of life

L16. the skills and qualities required to engage in enterprise, including seeing opportunity, managing risk, marketing, productivity, understanding the concept of quality, cash flow and profit

KS4: Living in the Wider World

L1. to evaluate their own personal strengths and areas for development and to use this to inform goal setting

L3. to think critically about extremism and intolerance in whatever forms they take (including sexist, religious, racist and political extremism, the concept of 'shame' and 'honour based' violence)

L4. to recognise the shared responsibility to protect the community from violent extremism and how to respond to anything that causes anxiety or concern

L5. how to recognise a 'cult'; how it differs from other types of group; how cults recruit; how to seek help if they are worried for themselves or for others

L6. how social media can offer opportunities to engage with a wide variety of views on different issues

L9. about harassment and how to manage this (including in the workplace); the legal consequences of harassment

L10. how their strengths, interests, skills and qualities are changing and how these relate to future employability

L11. about the information, advice and guidance available to them and how to access the most appropriate support³⁵

L12. to further develop study and employability skills (including time management, self-organisation and presentation, project planning, team-working, networking and managing online presence)

L13. about the range of opportunities available to them for career progression, including in education, training and employment

L14. about changing patterns of employment (local, national, European and global); about different types of business, how they are organised and financed

L15. to research, secure and take full advantage of any opportunities for work experience that are available

L16. about rights and responsibilities at work (including their roles as workers, and the roles and responsibilities of employers and unions)

L17. attitudes and values in relation to work and enterprise (including terms such as 'customer service' and 'protecting corporate or brand image')

L18. about confidentiality in the workplace, when it should be kept and when it might need to be broken

L19. to develop their career identity, including how to maximise their chances when applying for education or employment opportunities

L21. to be a critical consumer of goods and services (including financial services) and recognise the wider impact of their purchasing choices

L22. their consumer rights and how to seek redress