Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

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Date Reviewed / Adopted	Minute No.	Amendments Made	Next Review Date
September 2026			September 2027

Further information/Guidance	DfE 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (for introduction 1 September 2026) https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

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1.Introduction

This policy sets out our approach to Relationships and Sex Education, (RSE) and incudes information about our approach to Personal Social and Health Education. The provision for RSE at Ripley Junior School is based upon '*The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers July 2025'*.

Schools have a legal requirement to provide compulsory relationships and health education under the Children and Social work Act 20217. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but in line with DfE recommendations we teach sex education in years 5 and 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science.

2.What is RSE?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral, social and emotional aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, and sexual health.

Effective RSE is important for promoting and protecting the wellbeing of all children.
It aims to provide children and young people with the age-appropriate knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. RSE supports our pupils to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.

RSE is an important element of our safeguarding provision - it supports prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right, when and how to seek help and report abuse. Our positive approach develops pupils' understanding of safe, healthy relationships which is a protective factor for all children and young people. As outlined in 'Keeping Children safe in Education' this preventative education is delivered through a whole school approach.

RSE is a key element of our Personal Development programme. It also supports the teaching of British values, and our equality objectives. The aims of RSE align with our school values and vision of children being' Ready, Respectful and Safe'. We are preparing our children to be ready for their future lives, being respectful of themselves and others and know how to keep themselves and others safe. We believe that high quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn, and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life.

Aims
Our RSE curriculum aims to:

- provide accurate, age-appropriate information to all pupils.
- teach the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships.
- support children to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others.
- develop respect and tolerance for other people, faith and cultures who are different from them.
- develop an understanding of their rights and responsibilities within a range of relationships.
- support children to know how to keep themselves and others safe, off/online.
- support children to recognise and manage a range of feelings in their friendships and relationships, including disappointment or anger.
- support pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation, wellbeing and resilience.
- equip children to realise and manage risk, and keep themselves and others safe, off and online.
- help children recognise and report abuse, including online, seek advice and support, and know that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child.
- help children know and understand the benefits and importance of physical activity, good nutrition and sufficient sleep.
- prepare children for the physical and emotional changes of puberty.
- reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular relating to mental health, and discourage the pejorative use of language related to ill health.
- emphasise the relationships between physical health and mental wellbeing, and develop the knowledge and skills needed to develop healthy lifestyles.
- prepare girls to manage menstruation, including with requests for period products and informing them of the school's menstruation facilities e.g. bins and products available (see our Period Dignity policy.)
- Gain an age-appropriate understanding of human reproduction and birth.

Guiding Principles

Our approach follows a set of Guiding Principles as outlined by the Department of Education July 2025. These are:

a. Engagement with pupils. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSE is to children's lives throughout our RSE programme. We enable students to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers.

b. Engagement and transparency with parents and carers. Parents are recognised as partners in their child's RSE. Parents and carers are consulted on the RSE policy, provision and supported to discuss RSE content at home. See section 9 below.

c. Positivity. Our RSE builds positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships

d. Careful sequencing. We recognise that young people can start developing healthy behaviour and relationship skills as soon as they start school. We sequence teaching so that

pupils are supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harms.
e. Relevant and responsive. We develop the curriculum to be relevant, age and stage appropriate and accessible to pupils in their area, where appropriate working with local partners and other bodies to understand specific local issues and ensure needs are met.
f. Skilled delivery of participative education. The curriculum is delivered by skilled, trained staff.
g. Whole school approach. The curriculum is delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships.

3.Curriculum Provision

RSE at Ripley Junior School is part of the school's Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)programme, that also covers health, wellbeing and economic education.
It is taught through a balanced, progressive and broadly-based curriculum delivered within a whole school approach. The curriculum is taught in every year group, and topics are revisited to build pupils knowledge and skills.

Provision includes:

- Dedicated curriculum time for PSHE/ RSE– 45 minutes to 1 hour per week
- Visiting speakers, which are planned into the curriculum, including the school nursing team, Compass Changing Lives and Derbyshire fire service, as well as the local Police Community Support Offers (PCSOs)
- Other subjects/curriculum areas for example: science – reproduction and life cycles, computing – online safety, PE – physical wellbeing,
- Enrichment activities including online safety day, mental health week and neurodivergence week
- Assemblies
- Pastoral care and guidance – Nurture, Positive Play

As outlined in the DfE statutory guidance, our Relationships and Health Education includes teaching about:

Relationships Education (this is statutory for all pupils)

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being Safe

Health education (this is statutory for all pupils)

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection & prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

Science (this is statutory for all pupils)

Some elements of the RSE are taught through National Curriculum Science. In year 2, pupils are taught to notice that animals, including humans have offspring which grows into adults, and about the importance of hygiene.

In year 5 pupils should be taught to describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

Sex education

At Ripley Junior School we teach non-statutory sex education in Year 6 during Spring Term 2 (see diagram below) as part of our 'Growing Up' module. Our sex education comprises of lessons about how babies are conceived and born. It is taught in an age-appropriate, factual way within the context of a healthy, loving and safe relationships.

We consult with parents about the content of sex education. This process will include offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school, as well as advice about parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education.

Parents have a right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education lessons (see section 9); they do not have the right to withdraw their child from the statutory relationships and health education or national curriculum science lessons.

Resources

A range of resources will be used to support learning in RSHE. They will be carefully selected by teachers and overseen by the RSE lead. They will be up to date, relevant to children and young people and consistent with the aims and values of the school. All selected resources will be age appropriate and will be available for parents and carers to view on request.

We use the Derbyshire PSHE Matters scheme for our PSHE and RSE curriculum framework. This flexible framework is adapted where necessary to meet the needs of our pupils. There are 12 modules taught:

1. Drug Education - including how to manage risk and peer influences
2. Exploring Emotions - including how to recognise and manage feelings and emotions

3. Being Healthy - including the importance of looking after our mental health
4. Growing up - including age-appropriate sex education
5. Changes - including loss
6. Bullying Matters - including how to ask for help
7. Being Me - including identity and community
8. Difference and Diversity - including challenging stereotypes
9. Being Responsible - including looking after the environment
10. Being Safe - including online and offline
11. Relationships - including what is a healthy relationship
12. Money Matters - including enterprise

The table below indicates when these modules are taught in each year group.

	Autumn 1	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**
Year 3	Being Healthy	Difference and Diversity	Exploring Emotions	Relationships	Being Responsible	Bullying Matters
Year 4	Being Me	Drug Education	Changes	Growing Up	Money Matters	Being Safe
Year 5	Being Healthy	Difference and Diversity	Exploring Emotions	Relationships	Being Responsible	Bullying Matters
Year 6	Being Me	Drug Education	Changes	Growing Up	Money Matters	Being Safe

Our curriculum provision aims to be responsive and agile to meet the needs of our pupils. We may at times include new content to address any new safeguarding needs that may arise. We will inform parents in advance and share any relevant materials with parents on request.

For our RSE work is also supported by the 'Clued Up to Growing Up' resources.

- Boys and Girls
- Bits and Bobs and Sweat and Spots
- Your Mummy Ate My Football
- Year 6: Boys and Girls, Men and Women

More information about our PSHE and RSE curriculum is available on our website.

4. How we teach RSE

A safe environment

In RSE we create a safe learning environment, where lessons are guided by shared ground rules, to ensure children feel comfortable and confident to ask and answer questions around these important, and sometimes sensitive topics.

To support this, teachers:

- contribute to a culture in school where pupils are confident to ask for help support and information about a range for sensitive topics.
- avoid prejudice and assumptions about children and young peoples' abilities, desires, background and experiences.
- use distancing techniques, i.e. stories, characters, puppets in scenarios and depersonalised discussions when discussing sensitive issues.
- establish clear parameters about what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting during RSE lessons through a set of agreed ground rules.
- set the tone by speaking in a matter-of-fact way and ensuring that pupils discuss issues in a way which promotes a sensible and mature attitude.
- support any child with lived experience of any issues discussed and offer them a range of support options to access the learning.
- provide a positive, strengths-based approach and do not use shock, instruction or glamourisation when teaching sensitive topics.
- regularly signpost children within RSE lessons to support that is available to them in and out of school e.g. parents, school staff, question box, trusted adults, Childline.

Correct scientific terms for the private body parts are used in RSE lessons. The Department of Education has stated that as part of statutory Health Education the following words must be taught- vulva, vagina, penis, scrotum, testicles and nipples. This supports a healthy understanding of the body, reduces stigma around sensitive issues and ensures pupils have the confidence and vocabulary to report any concerns or abuse.

Answering pupils' questions

When answering pupil's questions, our emphasis is on supporting the child as we recognise that children whose questions go unanswered might instead turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online.

Pupils may on occasion ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. Where necessary, the teacher will refer the child to their parent or carer for an answer.

When responding to questions teachers will:

- reassure pupils that all questions are ok, and create a non-judgemental environment where pupils are confident to ask questions and discuss sensitive issues.
- where appropriate, ask the child for their understanding so that they can identify the appropriate starting point for an answer.
- encourage pupils to write down questions anonymously and post them in a 'question box'. The teacher will have time to prepare answers to all questions that are relevant.
- understand that questions do not have to be answered immediately and can be addressed later after liaising with the RSE subject lead if necessary.
- take care not to be drawn into providing more information than is appropriate to the age of the child or beyond the remit of this policy.
- feedback the range of questions to the RSE lead to inform programme development.
- consider if a question is too explicit, is deemed too old for a pupil to be asking, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises safeguarding concerns. The teacher will acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later, but on an individual basis (i.e. not in front of the whole class). Where necessary, the school's usual child protection/safeguarding guidelines will then be followed.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

As RSE covers a range of sensitive topics teachers are aware that a disclosure may be made during or after a lesson. Pupils understand where they can report any concerns and seek help.

If a child makes a disclosure, or their contribution raises a safeguarding concern, they will be supported sensitively. The disclosure will be recorded and responded to in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and the school safeguarding policy. Pupils will be notified beforehand through the ground rules how confidentiality will be handled, and what might happen if they choose to make a report. Where external agencies deliver lessons, we agree in advance how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by them.

Teaching methods

We use range participative and interactive learning methods in RSE so that that children can learn in ways that are engaging and inclusive. These include for example: stories, scenarios, active learning 'games', discussions etc. These are informed by pupil consultation.

Any sensitive content is taught factually, teaching does not promote early sexual activity and we endeavour to ensure teaching is medically and scientifically accurate.

5. Equality

Our school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which sets of the duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between those with protected characteristics and those without. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We recognise that all pupils have a right to equal access to RSE, and to see themselves represented in the curriculum.

We ensure RSE fosters equality by using range of resources that reflect the diversity in our community and beyond, in modern Britain. At times we explore faith and cultural perspectives in our RSE.

We ensure that all pupils learn about male and female body changes regardless of their gender. We explore gender stereotypes, the impact of these and how to challenge them so that all pupils can reach their full potential.

We are sensitive to pupils' circumstances, recognising that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. Our teaching and learning resources illustrate the wide range of family structures include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers.

6. Making RSE accessible to pupils with SEND

The RSE lead, SENDCo and DSL work closely together to ensure that provision for pupils with SEND is appropriate and accessible. This will include liaison with parents to support identification of specific RSE related learning needs and suitable approaches that can be supported at home. Parents will also be guided to information and support on the Derbyshire Local Offer RSE page.

All teachers are teachers of pupils with SEND and are trained to support learners in their classroom through high quality teaching, clear language and adaptive teaching strategies. In RSE, these adaptations may include, but are not limited to:

- Pre-teaching with support from families / SENCo
- Use of social stories
- Sample objects/images.
- 1:1 or small group teaching

7. How RSE is monitored and evaluated

The RSE lead monitors and evaluates RSE provision regularly to high standards and support continuous improvement. This takes places through learning walks, lesson observation, 'book looks', pupil questionnaires or focus groups, school council, review of assessment activities and staff feedback. The quality assurance methods are in line with those of other subjects in our school.
The RSE lead uses the feedback from quality assurance practices to monitor, adjust and evolve the curriculum provision to ensure we continue to support our children with the right provision at the right time. An annual report and plan of action is shared with governors. Governors will monitor the achievement of pupils in RSE.

Staff training
Our subject quality assurance practices, coupled with our invitation to staff to identify their RSE learning needs, help to ensure that staff are confident in their RSE planning and provision. The RSE lead provides regular and ongoing training and support to ensure staff are confident in their RSE knowledge, pedagogy ideas, and lesson delivery. This aims to secure a continuous cycle of development in RSE.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors are responsible to make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- teaching is accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- curriculum content and teaching materials are aligned with this statutory guidance.
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content, teaching materials and external providers, and on the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education.

Head Teacher is responsible to make sure that:

- The RSE lead is given appropriate subject leadership time to carry out their duties, and staff training time to keep staff appraised of RSE developments, and curriculum and assessment provision.
- Liaising with governors and RSE lead to agree the RSE Policy with parents.

RSE Lead Teacher is responsible to make sure that:

- there is a progressive spiral RSE curriculum for all pupils in school and a consistent approach to quality teaching in RSE.
- the development and delivery of effective RSHE across the school is up to date with latest developments in the subject including links to other areas such as safeguarding, equality and personal development.

- they work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the subjects complement and do not duplicate content covered in national curriculum subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE.
- staff are trained to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the RSE curriculum, the language used, and the themes covered in each year group.
- pupils report that their RSE provision is helping them at the right time in their daily lives and meets the evolving societal needs in which they find themselves.
- RSE is monitored and evaluated in line with all other subjects in the school.
- RSE support for parents is maintained in line with governor requirements.
- Where external visitor contributes to the RSE provision in school via workshops or assemblies, that their approach and content is age-appropriate and in line with our RSE and safeguarding policies. At this school this includes sessions from the Fire Service, Police Community Support Officers and Public Health nurses.

Teachers are responsible to make sure that:

- They plan, deliver and assess RSE lessons in line with the scheme of work for their year group.
- They monitor pupil progress in RSE and adapt lessons in line with the teaching and learning policy.
- Pupils requiring targeted or differentiated RSE are identified and supported.
- They engage with the RSE lead on staff development (whole school and/or individual as identified).
- They remain aware of the RSE Policy, and their responsibilities within this.

External providers

Our lessons are mostly taught by class teachers; however, some lessons may be delivered by the local Police Community Support Officer (PCSO), fire service, school nurses etc. Where this happens, the class teacher and, where appropriate, RSE lead will liaise with the provider to ensure that their approach and content is age-appropriate, integrated into the PSHE/ RSE scheme and in line with our RSE and safeguarding policies.

9. Engaging with Parents and Carers

We believe that parents are the first educators in the teaching of RSE and that it is a critical joint venture between school and home, to secure strong healthy relationships and to support successful learning.

By listening and responding to the views of pupils and parents we aim to ensure that RSE meets our pupils' needs and that topics are taught at the right time to keep our children

healthy and safe, and to support them to build positive relationships and avoid harms before they occur.

We are committed to supporting our parents and carers to engage with their child's RSE. We do this by:

- Consulting parents and carers on RSE policy development.
- Providing an overview of the RSE curriculum on our website.
- Providing termly information about upcoming topics.
- Notifying parents and carers about upcoming sex education.
- Offering parents and carers support in talking to their child about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school.
- Maintaining a lending library of resources.
- Sharing relevant posts on parenting messaging platform e.g. Class Dojo.

Most of this information is available on our dedicated PSHE and RSE page on our website: https://www.ripley-jun.derbyshire.sch.uk/page/pshe-rse/159089

How to view curriculum materials

Parents are invited to school annually to view our curriculum materials when we consult on our RSE policy.

Parents can also contact us to:

- arrange a suitable, mutually convenient time to view our RSE policy and resources.
- seek support around RSE topics being taught in school.

We will consult with parents about the content that will be taught within the non-statutory sex education. This process will include information about parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education.

Please note: Where our curriculum as stated in section 3 above, is adjusted to meet emerging local need, i.e. needs based on local data or local events, we will inform you of this adjustment in advance.

Right to withdraw from non-statutory content

Parents and carers cannot legally withdraw their child from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers have the right to withdraw from Sex Education apart from content that is taught within the Science National Curriculum.

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, however we follow the DfE recommendation that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science.

To request that your child is withdrawn from sex education lessons, parents should contact their child's class teacher in the first instance so that they can take time to address parental concerns and allay any fears they may have. If parents still decide to withdraw their child, then we, as a school, will document this process and ensure a record is kept.

10. How this policy has been produced

This policy has been produced through consultation with staff, governors, parents and pupils. It has been informed by national research, national and local safeguarding issues, local data and context, and pupil need, alongside legislation. Following consultation, it has been approved by governors.

11. Other policies

Keeping Children Safe in Education
Subject curriculum policies including science.
Health and safety
Behaviour
Equality
British Values
Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
Period Dignity Policy
RSE Policy – pupil version (to be written)