

St Anne's Infants School



Relationships and Sex Education policy

St Anne's Infants' takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationships and sex education (RSE) to all its pupils as part of the school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) curriculum very seriously. The school wants parents and pupils to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of pupils, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools, **however, sex education is not compulsory in primary schools**. The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as **the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals**.

This policy is written by the PHSE subject leader in consultation with the Headteacher. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy at parents' evenings, and teaching and non-teaching staff are invited to discuss it during training sessions. The policy is reviewed and approved by the governing body annually.

This policy has been written with due regard to our obligations under the public sector equality duty.

1. Policy aims

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. It is also about teaching what it is to be in a caring, stable and mutually supportive relationship with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship. RSE will outline the importance of valuing positive family relationships, however your family is made up, as building blocks for community and society.

The school would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE we are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see and experience either in person or online. We hope to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

2. Roles and responsibilities

School staff

It is important that *all* school staff feel comfortable to take PSHE classes and answer questions from pupils. If the teacher does not feel confident leading RSE discussions then that is likely to be reflected by the pupils, and their learning will be compromised. The school provides professional development training in how to deliver sex education; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSE is so important. There are certain members of the school leadership team, such as the school curriculum leader and PHSE leader, who hold responsibility for ensuring that the school's sex education provision is relevant to our pupils and effective, but this is generally a responsibility for all staff members and the school expects staff to voice opinions and share expertise in this area.

Governors and senior leaders will:

- Develop this school policy and review it on a yearly basis. This policy is developed in consultation with school parents, pupils and staff to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
- Ensure that all staff are given ongoing training on issues relating to RSE and how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to pupils. This may be because they do not feel that their training has been adequate or that aspects of the curriculum conflict with their religious beliefs.
- Ensure that sex education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding RSE to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Support parental involvement in the development of the RSE curriculum.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced RSE in school.
- Communicate freely with staff, parents and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as appropriate.

All staff will:

- Take it upon themselves to ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding sex education. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to the PHSE leader.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around sex education provision.
- Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they should take this concern to their line manager. No one else should be informed at this stage, and a breach of confidentiality may fall under staff misconduct and disciplinary procedures.
- Provide regular feedback to their line managers on their experience of teaching RSE and pupil response.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs. If teachers need support in this area they should speak to the school SENDco.

Pupils

RSE classes are a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development. Pupils will be taught to listen to each other, respect each others' thoughts and opinions and let an adult know if there is a problem.

As a staff we aim to provide a culture of openness, encouraging children to feel comfortable in talking to staff within school. Should a child make a disclosure to a member of staff, we are trained to listen and only use TED prompts (tell me... explain to me....describe....), record any disclosure on the appropriate school system and if necessary talk directly to a member of the safeguarding team.

Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by PHSE lead and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's pupils. In this way, the school hopes to provide pupils with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

Parents

The school expects parents to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed. For information on accessing school support, see section 5.

3. Implementation and curriculum

It is important that we implement our RSE policy consistently throughout the school and provide effective provision throughout classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide lessons that are specific to the needs of the pupils in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum we aim to enable our pupils to understand what healthy relationships look like ; empower them to speak out if anyone feels uncomfortable and to explore different attitudes, values and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions. It is important that pupils know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed.

Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the PSHEE leader or SLT.

Pupils with special educational needs

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to RSE.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information. Some of these include:

- practical activities
- using DVDs or video
- group and paired activities.

Withdrawal from RSE

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents to read this policy. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. It is, however, a statutory right of parents or carers to withdraw the children in their care from RSE. This excludes withdrawal from the elements of human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum Science.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from RSE should contact the Headteacher who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

Complaints

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints policy.

Equal opportunities

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the **school's behaviour policy**.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

We use the NSPCC PANTS materials annually but referred to throughout the year.

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's **child protection and safeguarding procedure** should be followed.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the safeguarding lead to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

4. Monitoring, review and evaluation

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we review the RSE curriculum yearly, and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy or sex education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- feedback from pupils
- feedback from parents
- feedback from staff
- planning scrutiny

The school will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

5. Support

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

This policy will be reviewed annually

Last review date: Jan 2025

Next review date: Jan 2026

Linked policies:

PSHE policy
Child protection and Safeguarding policy
Behaviour policy
SEN policy
E-safety policy