

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Date approved	<i>September 2026</i>
Review Period	<i>2 years</i>
Reviewed Date by Governors	<i>22.9.26</i>

Principle

The School is for children aged 9-16 from Manchester with an Education, Health and Care Plan for Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations and the latest DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2020 and the updates of 2025, including the Online Safety Act. 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 enables 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 also covers contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). In addition, it teaches what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.

Rationale

RSE forms a part of the curriculum because:

- It is a tool to safeguard children
- It equips them with the information and skills they need to form healthy, safe and fulfilling relationships with family, friends, partners and themselves
- It gives them the skills to take responsibility for their wellbeing and sexual health
- It promotes self-worth and contributes to the teaching of the wider PSHE curriculum
- It is statutory from September 2020

Ofsted (2014) states that in an Outstanding School: 'Pupils, appropriate to their age and capability, have an excellent understanding of relationships, sexual development, sexual consent and their human rights with regard to physical harm and sexual exploitation'.

Alongside this, the 2015 Ofsted framework states that in an outstanding school: 'Pupils can explain accurately and confidently how to keep themselves healthy. They make informed choices about healthy eating, fitness and their emotional health and wellbeing. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and are confident in staying safe from abuse and exploitation'.

Aims & Objectives

The aim of this policy is to enable the effective planning, delivery and assessment of RSE.

In KS3 & KS4 Relationships and Sex Education should prepare students for an adult life in which they can

- *Develop values and a moral framework that will help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate ones*
- *Understand the characteristics of a healthy relationship and recognise what makes a good friend, a good colleague, a successful committed relationship*
- *Recognise unacceptable behaviours in relationships and have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and manage the situation*
- *Be aware of human sexuality and to respect themselves and others*
- *Understand the consequences of their actions and to behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships*
- *Be well informed about the law relating to sex, consent and sexual harassment*
- *Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and the reasons for having protected sex*
- *Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves from unwanted conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, as well as the confidence to access confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary, treatment.*
- *Understand what consent means and factors that influence one's ability to consent*
- *Avoid being exploited or exploiting others and being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex*

Teaching staff in our school will be:

- Confident in planning, delivering and assessing the RSE curriculum
- Equipped to handle sensitive issues and to answer both pupil and parent questions

Every pupil should receive their full entitlement to RSE regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, faith or sexual orientation.

Equal Opportunities

The government have provided guidance on how the Equality Act 2010 relates to the education setting: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

- The Equality Act 2010 governs how the curriculum is delivered, and schools must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination
- Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children, including young people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT)
- Schools should always respect how pupils choose to identify themselves both in terms of gender and sexual identity

Content:

Classroom Management

RSE is delivered by staff that feel comfortable with the content of the lessons and can ensure, where possible, its successful implementation. The National Curriculum Science programme complements the RSE programme when the children are required to name body parts, and know about life processes, human reproduction and human life cycles.

Relationships are covered by the PSHCE scheme of work and are delivered as part of a planned programme. Monitoring takes place through observation and evaluation of learning outcomes.

Ground Rules

These provide a common values framework and clear parameters as to what will be taught in a whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis. They can include:

- No personal questions
- The right to pass
- The correct names for body parts

RSE is taught as part of the PSHE curriculum. Our approach to RSE goes beyond the provision of biological information; it focuses on attitudes and values, developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.

As children grow up it is important that they understand their own bodies, instincts and feelings. As a result, our programme of RSE includes:

- Sex education being appropriately delivered for the age and maturity of the pupils.
- A whole school approach that involves parents, carers, governors, health and school staff.
- Relevant staff training and support for those who deliver RSE.
- Children's views being listened to in an atmosphere of trust.
- Questions and answers, linking in with set ground rules.
- Adherence to the school's safeguarding policy.

The content is guided by the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE Education (Key Stage 3-5) to ensure a spiral curriculum across the Federation. Content areas are as follows:

The curriculum content covers a range of sensitive subjects, this may include:

- Sexuality;
- Gender and the needs of boys and girls;
- Religious and cultural beliefs;
- Homophobic bullying;
- Attitudes to disability, diversity & differences;
- Protection from abuse;
- Female genital mutilation.
- The topic of **consent** is covered as part of the curriculum and includes the right to withdraw consent after it has been given.

See PSHE Curriculum Map on website for more details

Year 7

PSHE – Influences on relationships

PSHE – Puberty and Keeping safe

PSHE - Families and changing relationships

Science – Sexual reproduction and contraception

Year 8

PSHE – Belonging and community

PSHE – Healthy and unhealthy relationships

Year 9

PSHE – Intimate sexual relationships

PSHE – Navigating online harms

Year 10

PSHE – Navigating the online world
PSHE - Friendship, diversity and challenging extremism
PSHE - Managing Influence
PSHE - Exploring consent and recognizing abuse

Year 11

PSHE – Safe relationships and sexual health
PSHE - Families, fertility and pregnancy

External Visitors

Good Practice in the Use of Visitors

School staff involve the pupils and students when choosing appropriate visitors into school. We do this by:

- Discussing the most appropriate visitor to support their work
- Preparing questions
- Allowing time to follow up the learning outcomes from the visit.

Visitors are also briefed in advance of the visit so that they understand their involvement and they are informed of:

- The time available
- Number of pupils, their age and ability
- The equipment, facilities and accommodation available to them.

The contribution of the visitor is complementary to the teacher's therefore a visitor will not be left alone. If an issue of a controversial nature should arise, school staff ensure that a balanced perspective is provided. Questions of a sensitive nature or any that are left unanswered will be addressed at an appropriate time, with the pupils understanding that this will happen.

Support from Outside Agencies

The school nurse will play an important role in delivering the RSE programme. We work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to our pupil needs and work in partnership with them to jointly plan their work within the schools.

Assessment & Evaluation

Pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on their learning during lessons through verbal and written feedback, write and draw activities and 'ask it basket' opportunities.

The school also uses pupil voice to influence and amend learning activities by reviewing the PSHE curriculum with the School Councils.

Teachers can reflect on their RSE delivery through CPD and the PSHE group Meetings.

Parents are informed about their child's progress in RSE through coffee mornings, school reports and the Federation website.

Engaging Stakeholders

The RSE policy is available to parents/carers through the school website.

We work closely with parents/carers by inviting them to school coffee mornings and engaging with them on current issues.

Parents/carers have the chance to share their views about RSE through these coffee mornings, in contact with form tutors and at review meetings.

Withdrawal of Children

Currently parents have the legal right to withdraw their children from all or any part of any Sex Education provided, except for national curriculum Science, but not the Relationships Education.

Relationship and Sex Education is taught in all year groups. If a parent/carer feels it necessary to withdraw their child, they should arrange to come to the school and discuss their concerns.

Parents/carers can request withdrawal from some or all of sex education up to three terms before the child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16.

In the case that the child is withdrawn from a lesson, that child must stay in school and will be assigned to another class until that specific lesson is over.

Confidentiality and Child Abuse and Protection Procedures.

Confidentiality

There may be times when a child wishes to confide in a member of staff. Pupils need to be aware that school staff cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Please see the Safeguarding Policy for further information. This policy is read by every member of staff and outlines areas of responsibility and referral procedures should a child confide in a member of staff, or a matter of concern arises. The school nurse follows a separate code of practice linked with their professional regulations.

Sexual activity

The legal age of consent in the UK is 16 years, however there are young people who are sexually active under this age. A child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity.

“Teenage Pregnancy is a significant public health issue that is both a cause and consequence of education and health inequality for young parents and their children”

Manchester Council, Joint Strategic Needs Assessment

At 25.9, Manchester’s teenage conception rate per 1,000 remains high compared to Greater Manchester at 22.3 and England at 18.8

This means that providing information about contraception, abortion, STIs (including HIV/AIDS) and sexual health services is paramount to contributing to the reduction in under 18s conception.

Provision if a pupil becomes pregnant

Pregnancy is not a reason for exclusion from school. We will work with the LEA and social services to provide appropriate support for the pupil during pregnancy and after the baby is born.

Child abuse and protection procedures

There are guidelines for staff on confidentiality and handling sensitive and controversial issues and supporting young people.

Teachers and other adults involved in RSE may sometimes hear disclosures that suggest a child is at risk of abuse. It is essential that all stake holders are aware of the schools' Safeguarding policy. A copy of this is available from the schools' website.

Where an adult believes a child may be at risk, the designated safeguarding lead must be consulted before any further action is taken.

Provision for pupils who are 'Looked After'.

Looked After Children and Previously Looked After Children follow the full PSHE curriculum in lessons. Any additional needs are looked at in termly PEP meetings and addressed on an individual basis.

Language and terminology

RSE plays an important role in equipping young people with the correct terminology so that they can safeguard themselves. Good vocabulary around RSE will assist them in talking comfortably, respectfully and accurately about growing up, the human body, and sex and relationships. Staff play a vital role in modelling the correct use of language in RSE. Teachers may want to share vocabulary lists with pupils and parents before a series of lessons.

The ability to use the medically correct terms for genitalia and other parts of the body is a key skill for young people. It helps them describe abusive behaviours and gives them confidence when accessing medical help.

As a Federation we challenge sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice.

Role of the school nurse:

The school nurse can deliver in partnership with teachers on:

Year 7: Puberty and reproduction

Year 8 or 9: Condoms and Sexually Transmitted Infections

Year 10: Pregnancy Options