

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy - Ashmead Primary School

Definition of RSE

Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) has been renamed as RSE: Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) to emphasise the relationships aspect of RSE. This was one of the recommendations from the Commons Education Committee Feb 2015

Sex and Relationship Education is not just learning about growing up, changes and reproduction. It is also about enabling children to make and maintain relationships with others, to understand about human sexuality and to feel good about themselves and the choices they make. This involves helping children to gain knowledge, develop skills and form positive beliefs and attitudes.

Context of RSE

The Department for Education (DfE) are working with stakeholders to set out suitable, age-appropriate content on RSE which focuses on mental wellbeing, consent, resilience, age-appropriate relationships and sex education, and keeping safe online. Regulations and statutory guidance will then be subject to full public consultation later this year (2017), with a new curriculum in schools by September 2019. In light of this, this policy will be reviewed when the new guidance is published.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

RSE and PSHE teach children and young people how to stay safe and healthy, and how to negotiate some of the personal and social challenges they will face growing up and as adults. These subjects form part of the building blocks young people need to thrive in modern Britain. At the moment, too many young people feel they don't have the RSE they need to stay safe and navigate becoming an adult.

The Purpose of RSE

The purpose of RSE is to provide knowledge about loving relationships, the nature of sexuality and the process of human reproduction. Alongside this, it should lead to the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which prepare pupils to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner. The RSE programme will benefit children, school and society. RSE has three main elements:

- Knowledge and Understanding including; emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, puberty, reproduction and pregnancy, similarities and differences between males and females, parts of the human body including the male and female reproductive parts, gender stereotyping and discrimination, different families, different types of relationships, healthy and unhealthy relationships and where to get help if needed
- Personal and Social Skills including; talking and listening to others, managing emotions, making friends and managing friendships, forming and maintaining loving, caring and respectful relationships, developing self-respect and empathy for others, respecting the differences between people, resilience to cope with change, making responsible and safe decisions, including on line
- Attitudes and Values including; feeling positive about growing up, the importance of respect, care and love, the value of family life, the importance of stable and loving relationships, including marriage (both heterosexual and gay) and civil partnerships, respect for rights and responsibilities in relationships, acceptance of difference and diversity, promoting gender equality.

Where is RSE taught?

RSE is taught through PSHE as well as in Science. This will ensure that it covers the statutory biological aspects, but also the social and emotional aspects. It is taught throughout the years, either as discrete topics/units or integrated into other topics such as Ourselves, Growing and Living Things, at a level appropriate to the needs and maturity of the pupils. There are also discrete teaching topics in particular years e.g. body changes in relation to puberty in Year 5 and reproduction in Year 6. We ensure that the same messages about being safe online are taught through RSE as in Computing.

How is RSE taught?

- On the whole pupils are taught in mixed groups to ensure that boys and girls learn the same information. However, it is useful in Years 5 and 6 to include some time when single sex groups can discuss issues, ideally with a teacher of the same gender. This is mostly applicable when they learn about body changes through puberty and about reproduction.
- Teachers set a group agreement or ground rules with pupils to ensure that an atmosphere is created where pupils feel able to ask questions, discuss concerns, talk about feelings and relationships, but do not discuss or ask private information of each other or the teacher.
- Questions are answered honestly and sensitively, appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. Some questions may not be answered immediately if the teacher feels they need to consult with the Headteacher and some questions may be more appropriately answered on a one-to-one basis, rather than with the whole class. In Y5 and 6 we provide a question box so that pupils can anonymously ask questions, which are then answered by the class teacher.
- Resources, such as aspects of the Channel 4 DVD 'Living and Growing' and leaflets are chosen to ensure that they are appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils. They take into account equality of opportunity through their use of language, cultural attitudes, family make-up and images, including body image, avoiding stereotyping, racism and sexism.
- The RSE policy reflects and is in line with our equal opportunities policy and the school ensures that the RSE teaching programme is an inclusive one and is appropriate and relevant to all pupils, including those with SEN and disabilities. Teachers ensure that the content, approach and use of inclusive language reflect the diversity of the school community, and help all pupils feel valued and included, regardless of their gender, ability, disability, experiences and family background.
- Where needed, RSE is differentiated to meet the needs of pupils and specialist resources may be used to respond to their individual needs. In some cases pupils have individual support or work in small groups with a TA or learning mentor
- Teachers do not discuss details of their personal relationships with pupils.
- Teachers are sensitive to the issues of different types of relationships. Promoting inclusion and reducing discrimination are part of RSE throughout the school and reflect our equality policy.
- Children will have thoughts, opinions and questions about sex and relationships. In responding to these the school will encourage respectful expression of opinion while challenging opinions that could be deemed oppressive. Empathy, respect, freedom and responsibility are four of our school values that we would remind children of during these discussions.

Who teaches RSE?

RSE will be taught by the class teacher but sometimes health professionals or other visitors will help deliver RSE, such as the school nurse or a visit from a pregnant mum or a mum with their baby. If visitors are involved in RSE we will

- plan and evaluate their contribution as part of the school's RSE teaching programme.
- provide the visitor with an up-to-date copy of the school's RSE Policy and ensure they adhere to it

- ensure that the class teacher is present throughout the lesson, taking responsibility for class management
- follow up as necessary in later lessons

Confidentiality, safeguarding and child protection

As part of RSE children will be reminded about personal safety, e.g. the NSPCC's 'pants' rule. It is possible that a pupil may disclose personal information. Staff understand that they cannot promise pupils absolute confidentiality, and pupils know this too. If teachers are concerned in any way that a pupil is at risk of sexual or any other kind of abuse, they will talk to the Designated Child Protection Officer, which at Ashmead is the headteacher Sean O'Flynn, and follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures. If a member of staff suspects there to be any Child Protection (CP) issue involving a child, or is faced with a disclosure, then s/he has a duty to again follow the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.

Working with parents/carers and child withdrawal procedures

We place the utmost importance on sharing responsibility with parents and carers for their children's education. We do our best to find out about cultural views, which may affect the RSE curriculum and will try to balance parental views with our commitment to comprehensive RSE and equality

We will work to inform and involve parents and carers by:

- Making the policy available on Ashmead's website
- Inviting parents and carers to a meeting or workshop to discuss RSE in the school and help them talk to their children about growing up
- Discussing individual concerns and helping parents and carers support the needs of their children

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from RSE, apart from the statutory national curriculum. This means that parents and carers cannot withdraw their children from RSE aspects of the science national curriculum.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the RSE curriculum they must arrange a meeting with a member of the Senior Leadership Team who will talk through their concerns and discuss the benefits of school RSE. If they decide to withdraw their child, work will be provided to do in another class. Even when a child has been withdrawn from RSE lessons, if the child should ask questions at other times, these questions would be answered honestly by staff.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school's governing body has overall responsibility for ensuring pupils are offered a comprehensive programme of RSE during their time in school and they must have an up to date, written policy, reviewed every two years which must be available to parents.

The headteacher is responsible for the implementation of the policy and liaising with the governing body, parents and other appropriate agencies as well as the monitoring and evaluation of the policy through learning walks or lesson observations.

Phase Leaders together with the RSE lead and the headteacher have a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will also disseminate information and provide INSET relating to RSE.

All staff, both teaching and non-teaching, should be aware of this policy and how it relates to them.

Date policy approved: June 2017

Committee responsible: Curriculum and Achievement

Review date: June 2019 (or earlier if guidance available)