



EDGEBOROUGH SCHOOL

RSE Policy

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

(including EYFS and Boarding)

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Introduction

From April 2021, schools have a statutory requirement to provide relationships and sex education (RSE) to children aged up to 16. Since September 2020, there has been a consultation process with staff, parents and pupils to ensure that our RSE programme reflects statutory requirements, is professionally informed and has our pupils' needs and the School's values at its heart. Consultation includes Parent Representatives, who help support the parent voice and opinion when consulting latest policies. These working groups provide the opportunity for questions from parents, sharing ideas and ensuring the parent body have been consulted. The programme is designed to support and complement the role of parents who have the prime responsibility in this sensitive area.

Effective relationship and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. The objective of sex and relationship education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. It will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood. Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. Children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

“In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.” Secretary of State 2019

The subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise. The content supports the wider work of the school in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character which we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society.

Links to statutory guidance and regulatory framework

This policy has been created to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2021, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Children and Social work Act 2017
- Boarding Schools; national minimum standards (DfE) September 2022
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2019
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010, including reference to protected characteristics
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Education Act 2011
- Children Act 1989
- Keeping children safe in education (DfE, September 2023)

Definition of Relationship and Sex Education

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of the characteristics of family life, marriage, civil partnership, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.

RSE should be gradually developed as an integral part of the curriculum in a way that is appropriate to the age of the children.

RSE is not just about reproduction and sexual health. These are very important but RSE must also strive to enable children to act responsibly in making and maintaining relationships with others and to feel good about themselves and the choices they make. Edgeborough strives to give children the capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

Children should be encouraged to develop assertiveness skills and the ability to respect themselves and others in the context of their own sexual development while taking account of sexuality, gender, roles and responsibility.

It has these main elements (to be taught at age-appropriate stages between Early Years and 13):

- attitudes and values – learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations; – learning the value of family life, marriage, civil partnerships, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children; – learning the value of respect, love and care; – exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas; and – developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- personal and social skills – learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively; – developing self-respect and empathy for others; – learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice; – developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made; – managing conflict; and – learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse. – making a distinction between the online and real world
- knowledge and understanding – learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages; – understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships; – learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services; – learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay; and – the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy.

Importance of RSE

Children learn about sex and relationships from a young age. Some of the things they learn are incorrect, confusing and frightening. Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation, rather it enables children to mature, build up their confidence and self-esteem and to understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity until they are ready.

All of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect for the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

Parents and RSE

Parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and experience has told us that building on what pupils learn at home is an important part of delivering a good education. The school's RSE programme aims to complement the role of the parent/carer. National guidance from the DfE (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. 2019, updated 2020) advises schools on the themes that should be covered. RSE should support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development in addition to their mental well-being. Parents are consulted on the RSE policy and curriculum via the Parent Policy Consultation Committee.

Formal RSE will be taught through compulsory science lessons and during ARK (PSHE) lessons. Informally children will learn about RSE through the values and ethos of the school.

The RSE themes and objectives are integrated under the umbrella of the PHSE objectives and shared half termly with parents through the ARK (PHSE) newsletters.

Parents are offered the opportunity to come in to school to view the RSE resources once a year.

Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw children from certain aspects of the RSE curriculum. These are the aspects linked directly to sex education. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationship education or health education.

Parents will be informed about any teaching of sex education. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. The Head will automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education, other than as part of the science curriculum. Before granting any such request the head will discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The school will document this process to ensure a record is kept. The Head will discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. - Confirmation that arrangements are made to ensure that where a pupils' parent requests that the pupils is wholly or partially excused from sex education as provided as part or relationships and sex education the pupils is so excused until the request is withdrawn unless or to the extent that the head teacher considers that the pupils should not be so excused.

Statement of aims for RSE

Aspects of RSE are taught as an integral part of the school's ARK (PSHE) provision throughout the school from Reception to Year 8. In this way children are able to develop their ideas, knowledge and skills gradually and appropriately.

AIMS:

- RSE should be culturally appropriate and inclusive of all children, including those with SEND.
- RSE should be taught age appropriately
- RSE should help all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives.

RSE should contribute to the foundation of ARK (PSHE) and Citizenship by ensuring that all children:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- are prepared for puberty
- foster healthy peer-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls
- develop positive behaviours that are inclusive and non-stereotypical
- understand how friendships can support mental well-being
- develop healthy nurturing relationships of all kinds.

RSE will:

- provide information which is easy to understand and relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the children
- include the development of communication and social skills
- encourage the exploration and clarification of values and development of positive attitudes
- provide information about legal implications
- provide information about where to go for help

- comply with the Equality Act, 2010 and is compliant with all statutory government guidance.

Statement of values for RSE

- RSE will reflect the values of the ARK (PSHE) programme.
- RSE will be taught in the context of relationships.
- RSE will promote children's self-esteem and emotional wellbeing and help them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships based on respect for themselves and for others at home, school, work and in the community.

Relationship Education, Primary (YR-6)

The focus is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them.

Pupils are taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.

Respect for others is taught in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and others' boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

Teachers talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts enables pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

When teaching relationships content, teachers address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families

headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils are encouraged to develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This is achieved in a variety of ways, including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely. Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

Through Relationships Education (and RSE), pupils are taught the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This is delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils are taught how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it is important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong.

Managing Difficult Questions

Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. The school has a graduated, age-appropriate programme of Relationships Education. Children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages, leading to differing types of questions or behaviours. Our teaching methods take account of these differences (including when they are due to specific special educational needs or disabilities) and the potential for discussion on a one-to-one basis or in small groups is utilised. The school carefully considers what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting, and provides teachers with support and training in answering questions that are better not dealt with in front of a whole class.

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary education supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. The school has a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. Both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born. The school consults parents before delivering the sex education programme in Year 5, including detailed content of what will be taught. This process includes offering parents support in talking to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school. The school allows parents a right to withdraw their children from sex education beyond the national

curriculum for science. Teaching takes account of the developmental differences of children, special educational needs and disabilities. The school ensures that their teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and religious backgrounds of their pupils.

Relationship Education, Secondary (Y7&8)

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. RSE at Edgeborough 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 teaches what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

RSE provides clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education. Teachers build on the foundation of Relationships Education and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time, extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught about intimate relationships, pupils are also taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. This teaching enables pupils to distinguish between content and experiences that exemplify healthy relationships and those that are distorted or harmful. Pupils are taught where to access help and how to share any problems that they have experienced. This could be within school or using national resources, such as the NSPCC, Childline and Everyone's Invited.

Pupils should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They are also taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing. Relationships Education is underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual. These include character traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice, underpinned by an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth.

The school provides planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely. Pupils are taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity are explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. When teaching about these topics, it is recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity. There is equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships. The applicable law is taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens. Pupils are well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to

make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

Internet safety is also addressed. Pupils are taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Pupils should have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online, for example, how personal data is captured on social media or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them. Edgeborough also looks at the issue of consensual or non-consensual sharing of nudes or semi nudes. The Online Safety Working Group is constantly developing strategies and guidance to promote safe and positive use of online platforms and facilities.

See our E-Safety Policy for further information.

Relationship Education Curriculum: RSE is taught through various curriculum areas:

Curriculum Area	Subject content
Science	Lifecycles of mammals Sexual and asexual reproduction Fertilisation Main stages of human lifecycle Human reproduction
PSHE: by end of Primary level	Families and people who care for me Caring friendships Respectful relationships Online relationships Being safe Mental wellbeing Internet safety and harms Physical health and fitness Healthy eating Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco Health and prevention Basic first aid Changing adolescent body
PSHE: within Key Stage 3:	Families Respectful relationships, including friendships Online and media Being safe Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health Mental wellbeing Internet safety and harms Physical health and fitness Healthy eating Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco Health and prevention Basic first aid Changing adolescent body

Form Time/Assemblies	Time/Circle These provide discussion opportunities which reflect and highlight the school ethos as well as the foundations of the PSHE Policy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kindness • Respect • Inclusivity • Self-awareness *See PSHE Policy for further details.
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Teaching Provision for RSE

The Head of ARK (PHSE) is responsible for the design and implementation of the ARK (PHSE and RSE) curriculum. All pupils have a dedicated session of 50 minutes each week. In Reception to Year 2 this is with their form teacher. In Years 3-8 these lessons are with a specialist ARK (PHSE) teacher. The school has one ARK (PHSE) specialist teacher in Year 3-8. Content of the RSE programme is also supplemented by Form Time and Assemblies, as well as outside organisations and visitors.

Please see the ARK (PSHE) Policy for further information.

Monitoring Provision of RSE

The Head of ARK (PSHE) will monitor the provision of RSE. This will be completed by:

- pupil conferencing
- Records of pupil work
- Annual curriculum reviews
- Parent consultation
- Governor review

This will be overseen by the Deputy Heads (Pastoral and Academic).

Monitoring the RSE Policy

The policy is reviewed and updated annually by the Head of Science, Head of ARK (PHSE) and the DSL. It is approved by Edgeborough SLT with reference to the parent body at each review.

The policy is available on the school website.