



Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy



Avonwood Primary School

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Avonwood Primary School

SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION POLICY

Introduction

Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE is NOT about the promotion of sexual activity.

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, 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.”

(Taken from the DfE Statutory Guidance for RSE and Health Education 2020)

The DfE guidance makes clear that the cultivation of resilience and positive character attributes is most effective when set in a school wide context where such virtues are actively developed, promoted and practised. This underlines the importance of all our schools fully embracing our Framework for Excellence to help pupils believe they can achieve, persevere, and show courage, kindness and determination and will be achieved, in part through our Relationships Education. Through effective Relationship Education (and RSE), Avonwood will teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. These subjects complement Health Education as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach.

At the heart of these subjects is keeping children safe. Our Safeguarding policy should be read in conjunction with this.

Sex and relationships education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. Children need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their lives in a positive way in an increasingly complex world. In particular, the development of productive and lasting relationships with others is a deeply important part of human growth and personal development. It is about the understanding of the importance of loving and caring relationships. It is about the teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with others, including online.

High-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of Relationships, Relationships and Sex and Health Education can help prepare children for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, both in the real world and online. These subjects aim is to give children and young people the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will need in order to make responsible decisions about their life, to learn to respect themselves and others, and to move with confidence from childhood into adolescence and adulthood. It is centrally concerned with supporting children and young people through their physical, emotional and moral development, helping to ensure they develop resilience, know how and when to ask for help, and know where to access support. Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to become sexually active at a younger age.

The underlying principles of the RSE Policy are to:

- a) Enable pupils to understand their biological aspects of reproduction, the life cycle of a human and be able to name parts of the human body as per the Science Curriculum (National Curriculum for Primary School 2013)
- b) To allow children to understand the characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults. This starts from the very basics of what a relationship is, what friendship is and what family means and to know when something is wrong, including online
- c) Prepare pupils for puberty and adulthood and develop skills for a healthier and safer lifestyle
- d) Allow pupils to understand the ideas of respect, privacy, kindness, permission seeking and giving and honesty, so that they can go on to lead fulfilling and happy lives
- e) Make pupils aware of the importance of managing health and emotional wellbeing
- f) Allow pupils to discuss moral values and explore those held by different cultures and groups within society
- g) Enable pupils to respect and care for their bodies and to understand the concept of stereotyping

The RSE programme at Avonwood Primary is a sensitive and responsible one, which allows pupils to explore questions from scientific, personal and moral perspectives, at an age appropriate level. In addition, RSE will promote self-esteem and emotional health and mental wellbeing and help them form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community.

Avonwood Primary recognises the important role parents play in educating children about matters relating to sex and relationships. The RSE programme at Avonwood Primary will meet the statutory requirements for provision, which are outlined in the 1988 Education Reform Act and the Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2020). This states that all pupils should be offered the opportunity of receiving a comprehensive, well-planned programme of sex education during their school careers through a curriculum that:

- a) "promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and of society"
- b) "prepares such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life."

Parental and staff involvement regarding the policy

The Governing Body is responsible for establishing and maintaining this Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy and for ensuring that it is followed. The Governing Body delegates authority to the Headteacher, to administer the RSE policy on its behalf and ensure that it is adhered to at Avonwood Primary.

The policy applies to the Headteacher and to all staff employed by the school. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Equal Opportunities, Health and Safety, Safeguarding and Online Safety Policies.

As a primary academy school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. It is also compulsory for all schools to teach Health and Relationship Education. Schools are also required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. We are not required to provide sex education, however as we follow the National Curriculum, we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum. In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

The religious background of all pupils will be taken into account when planning teaching so that sensitive topics that need to be taught are handled appropriately. Therefore, we will ensure that all teaching complies with the relevant provisions of the Equalities Act (2010), under which religion or belief are protected characteristics.

Alongside the requirement to take the religious background of all pupils into account, teaching will reflect:

- a) the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make; and
- b) the recommendations for teaching content regarding intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health as set out at in the Annex to this document.

Through these subjects, we want to support all young people to be happy, healthy and safe – we want to equip them for adult life and to make a positive contribution to society.

Parental right to withdraw children

Avonwood value the role of parents in the development of children's understanding about relationships. Section 241 of the Education Act 1993 and the Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2020) gives parents the right to withdraw their children from the school's programme of **sex education**, other than those elements that are required by the Science National Curriculum. *However, parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education, or from the science curriculum, which relates to sex education in terms of teaching about the human body and the changes to it as grows, including puberty.*

Under exceptional circumstances, the small number of parents who wish to exclude their children from this programme should write to the Headteacher, stating their objections, this can then be discussed with the Headteacher and together we can agree an appropriate programme of study.

The school will inform parents and carers when aspects of the RSE programme are taught and will provide opportunities for parents to view the resources being used.

Teaching and Learning Objectives

RSE education is delivered by class teachers, usually in the summer term, as part of the personal, social, health, citizenship and emotional (PSHE) programme of study and also in science lessons covering reproduction. At Avonwood, we have adapted our own RSE scheme of work for Years F-6, based on the Jigsaw Programme which we use throughout our PSHE learning. This ensures that the PSHE education is appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils and is regularly reviewed by subject and school leaders. Lessons are based around a key question (theme) which changes half-termly. Some aspects of the RSE curriculum may also be taught through our Online Safety curriculum and mental health learning.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include married/unmarried parents, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

We believe that pupils should be taught about and prepared for the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference, and educate pupils about healthy relationships.

Health education focuses on the characteristics of good physical health and wellbeing. This starts with pupils being taught the benefits of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, as well as giving children the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions everyone experiences. RSE includes:

- Mental wellbeing

- Internet Safety (the importance of balancing time spent on and off line, and for older children in primary school this should extend to why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions.)
- Physical Health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

Together, these areas give a firm foundation for then exploring poor health and wellbeing including the impact of unhappiness, loneliness and bullying.

Sex and relationship education is usually delivered in mixed gender groups, however, there may be occasions where single gender groups are more appropriate and relevant, this is considered on an annual basis and mixed gender groups are used wherever possible.

Pupils with SEND

As far as is appropriate, pupils with special educational needs should follow the same PSHE education programme as all other students and will be taught all RSE objectives. Careful consideration is given concerning the level of scaffolding needed, and in some cases the content or delivery will have to be adapted. Teachers will ensure that RSE teaching is differentiated to ensure that children of all abilities can access the learning in a developmentally appropriate way.

Inclusion

The PSHE and RSE policy reflects and is in line with the schools' equal opportunities beliefs. Our RSE teaching programme is an inclusive one, reflecting our ethos. Teachers will 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 needs, gender, ability, disability, religious beliefs, experiences and family background.

Curriculum and Assessment

Government guidance on RSE, Relationships Education and Health Education lists what pupils should know by the end of primary. These statements are used to plan RSE and broader PSHE education programmes in conjunction with our Jigsaw programme. As a result, the RSE curriculum builds on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

Staff training

All staff involved in the delivery of RSE will be trained in:

- a) The legislation applying to the delivery of RSE
- b) Dealing with sensitive and controversial situations in the classroom
- c) Child Protection Issues (regarding information that pupils may reveal as part of or after a lesson, and indicators of inappropriate sexual behaviour/attitudes)

Monitoring and evaluation

The governing body will approve the PSHE and RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that PSHE and RSE is taught consistently across the school with the support of subject leaders Miss Glenard and Miss Walker.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering PSHE and RSE in a sensitive and non-biased way
- Being aware and mindful of the background, family structure and beliefs of the children in their class
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual children
- Engaging with parents to ensure they are aware of what is being taught in the RSE curriculum
 - Show parents a representative sample of resources that are planned (regardless of copyright laws) – lead by PSHE lead at annual meeting.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching PSHE or RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher and PSHE lead.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in PSHE and RSE content and treat others with respect and sensitivity whilst doing so.

Answering Questions

Staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics will be discussed using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others who may have a different opinion. Both formal and informal RSE arising from pupils' questions will be answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned and the limits of the year group topics whilst bearing in mind pupils may turn to the internet for information to address any unanswered questions. All children will be invited to place their questions into the question box at the end of sessions so that teachers can ensure they give the appropriate answers in the following lesson.

It is important to distinguish between the school's function of providing sex and relationships education generally, and the giving of advice to individual pupils on these questions. Good teachers will always take a pastoral interest in the welfare and wellbeing of their pupils. It is also important to recognise that this function should never trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities and we would seek to discuss this with parents prior to addressing the child's questions.

If a teacher believes there is a risk to a pupil's physical or emotional health and/or wellbeing, then the teacher has the responsibility to:

- a) Inform the pupil at the start of any discussion that they cannot keep information confidential if they suspect a pupil is at risk
- b) Ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications of their behaviour
- c) Communicate any information about the potential risk to the school's Designated Safeguarding Leader

Complaints

Any complaints about the relationships and sex education programme should be made in accordance with the school's usual complaints procedures.

Appendix A

Statutory Relationships education expectations for the end of Primary Schools

By the end of primary school, pupils will need to know:

Families and people who care for me

1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.
2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.
5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.
3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.
4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.
6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.
7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.

Respectful, kind relationships

1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.
2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.
3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.
4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.
5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.
7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.
8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.
9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.
10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.
11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Online safety and awareness

1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.
2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.
3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which

protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.

4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.

5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.

6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.

Being Safe

1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.

2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.

3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.

4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.

5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.

6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.

7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Sex education expectations

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but we recommend that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science. 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. Schools may also cover human reproduction in the science curriculum, but where they do so, this should be in line with the factual description of conception in the science curriculum. 31. Primary schools should consult parents about the content of anything

that will be taught within sex education. This process should 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.

Appendix B – Health Education

Statutory Health education expectations by the end of Primary School

By the end of primary, pupils will need to know:

Wellbeing

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.
2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.
7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.
8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.
9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

Wellbeing online:

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.
2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.

3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.
6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.
7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.
8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.
9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.
10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.
11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness:

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.
3. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Healthy eating:

1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
3. The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
4. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping:

1. The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

Health protection and prevention:

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.
4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular checkups at the dentist.
5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

Personal safety:

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.
2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

Basic first aid:

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

Developing bodies:

1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.