



# Thorndon CofE Primary School

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)

**Approved by:** The Governing Body

**Last reviewed on:** Summer 2023

**Next review due by:** Summer 2026

## Contents

1. Aims .....	2
2. Statutory requirements .....	2
3. Policy development.....	2
4. Definition.....	3
5. Curriculum .....	3
6. Delivery of RSE .....	3
7. Roles and responsibilities .....	4
8. Parents' right to withdraw .....	5
9. Training.....	5
10. Monitoring arrangements.....	5
Appendix 1: By the end of primary school pupils should know .....	6
Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE .....	12

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### 1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

### 2. Statutory requirements

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](#).

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At Thorndon Primary School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Please refer to our funding agreement and articles of association for further information (found on school website).

### 3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

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1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/carer consultation – the draft policy was shared on the website and parents/carers were asked to complete a short survey about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE using surveys and discussions
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

## 4. Definition

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

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## 5. Curriculum

Our SRE curriculum is set out as per the Jigsaw curriculum maps (Relationships and Changing Me) which can be found on the Curriculum page of our school website under RSE. If you would like a paper copy of these maps then please contact us.

We have adopted the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Primary sex education will focus on:

- › Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- › How a baby is conceived and born

## 6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Below outlines our focus for Relationships Education, Health Education (specifically the changing adolescent body) and Sex Education. Further details about the statutory requirements for relationships and health education can be found in Appendix 1.

### 6.1 Relationships Education

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- › Families and people who care for me
- › Caring friendships
- › Respectful relationships
- › Online relationships

- › Being safe

## 6.2 Health Education

Health education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing including:

- › 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

## 6.3 Sex Education

The DfE Guidance 2019 (p.23) recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.

However, 'Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools'. (p. 23)

Schools are to determine the content of sex education at primary school. Sex education 'should ensure that 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'.

At Thorndon Primary School, puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education which means that parents cannot choose to withdraw their child from these lessons.

At Thorndon Primary School, we believe children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school, so we define Sex Education as understanding human reproduction. Elements of this may be taught in statutory science lessons which parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from. However, some elements of Sex Education may be taught in PSHE lessons and, in these instances, we will inform parents of their right to request their child be withdrawn from the PSHE lessons that explicitly teach this (e.g. lessons about conception or birth). The school will inform parents of this by letter before the lessons are taught.

All areas of learning in RSE 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 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).

RSE is taught in a way that is appropriate for the age and understanding of the children, including taking into account any children's individual needs including SEN.

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Executive Headteacher and Head of School to account for its implementation.

### 7.2 The Executive Headteacher and Head of School

The Executive Headteacher and Head of School is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory or non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

### **7.3 Staff**

Staff refers to all class teachers with all class teachers being responsible for teaching RSE.

Staff are responsible for:

- › Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- › Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- › Monitoring progress
- › Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- › Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory or non-science components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Executive Headteacher or Head of School.

### **7.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

## **8. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory or non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Executive Headteacher/ Head of School.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

## **9. Training**

Staff use the Jigsaw resources to help them deliver RSE. Teaching RSE is covered as part of induction and there are opportunities for CPD throughout the school year.

## **10. Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Head of School through:

- Planning/ book scrutinies
- Learning walks

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Head of School regularly. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

## Appendix 1: By the end of primary school pupils should know

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION	
TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability</li> <li>• The characteristics of healthy family life, 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</li> <li>• That others' families, 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</li> <li>• That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up</li> <li>• That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong</li> <li>• How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed</li> </ul>
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends</li> <li>• The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties</li> <li>• That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded</li> <li>• That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right</li> <li>• How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed</li> </ul>

## RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs</li><li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li><li>• The conventions of courtesy and manners</li><li>• The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness</li><li>• That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority</li><li>• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help</li><li>• What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive</li><li>• The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults</li></ul>
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not</li><li>• That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous</li><li>• The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them</li><li>• How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met</li><li>• How information and data is shared and used online</li></ul>

## RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)</li><li>• About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe</li><li>• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact</li><li>• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know</li><li>• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult</li><li>• How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard</li><li>• How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so</li><li>• Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources</li></ul>

## HEALTH EDUCATION

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Mental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.</li><li>• That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations.</li><li>• How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings.</li><li>• How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.</li><li>• The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness.</li><li>• Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests.</li><li>• Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support.</li><li>• That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing.</li><li>• Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom 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).</li><li>• It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough.</li></ul>

## HEALTH EDUCATION

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Internet safety and harms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.</li> <li>• About the benefits of rationing 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.</li> <li>• How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private.</li> <li>• Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted.</li> <li>• That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health.</li> <li>• How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted.</li> <li>• Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.</li> </ul>
Physical health and fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.</li> <li>• The importance of building regular exercise 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, vigorous exercise.</li> <li>• The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity).</li> <li>• How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.</li> </ul>
Healthy eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).</li> <li>• The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.</li> <li>• 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).</li> </ul>
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking.</li> </ul>

## HEALTH EDUCATION

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Health and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.</li><li>• About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.</li><li>• The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.</li><li>• About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.</li><li>• About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.</li><li>• The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination.</li></ul>
Basic first aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary.</li><li>• Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.</li></ul>
Changing adolescent body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes.</li><li>• About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.</li></ul>

## Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	
Staff signature	