



Overthorpe C of E Academy

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Written: January 2024

Review: January 2027



How this Policy was developed

This policy has been developed in line with Department for Education statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers (2020). There has been consultation with staff, pupils and parents as required by the Department for Education. We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the evolution of our school's Relationships Education programme.

This process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a working group pulled together all relevant information including national and local guidance.
2. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to work with us on the policy, look at examples of resources, and make recommendations.
3. The policy was shared with governors.
4. Staff consultation – staff had the opportunity to look at the draft policy and make recommendations.
5. Pupil consultation – we spoke to pupils about the skills they would like to learn.
6. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the chair and vice- chair of governors and ratified.

Requirements on schools in law

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. This is why Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as Health Education being compulsory in all state-funded schools. We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. As a school, we complement and reinforce this role and see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. (Department for Education - Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education - 2021) The statutory government guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Part of our school vision statement states: 'In our family, we nurture the courage and skills to fly higher than the flock...' so at Overthorpe C of E Academy, see that providing the skills and knowledge in order to thrive in this environment extremely important.

What is Relationships (and Sex) Education?

We aim to provide a learning atmosphere where children feel safe and relaxed, and where they feel confident to engage in discussions around potentially sensitive subjects and themes.



Our Relationships and Sex Education programme will be delivered in an age appropriate and sensitive manner by qualified staff. Teaching is taught in mixed gender groups. As a school, we subscribe to the leading children's health and wellbeing charity, Coram Life Education programme SCARF, which is a comprehensive RSE programme that delivers planning and assessment materials needed to meet these legal requirements.

Relationships Education teaches the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, focusing on friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults.

Children need to learn about relationships, the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, human sexuality and sexual health in an age-appropriate way. They need to learn about puberty, how a baby is conceived and born, body ownership and safeguarding. All of this helps them to develop the skills and knowledge to keep them safe. Our SCARF Relationships Education curriculum also includes statutory Health Education as well as non-statutory sex education. Therefore, we often refer to this as RSE: Relationships and Sex Education.

Our resources help children to be safe, healthy and happy. Delivered as part of PSHE and Science, SCARF meets SMSC, safeguarding, and emotional wellbeing requirements, as well as ensuring that they meet all the DfE Primary Relationships Education and Health Education and National Curriculum Science requirements.

We are also confident that our choice in scheme (SCARF) is one which supports recognises and supports the Christian ethos of our school. The providers of the scheme state that: "The RSE elements of SCARF are based on the SCARF values of Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience and Friendship. We believe that all children deserve to be safe, cared for and to learn the skills they need to develop healthy relationships. We feel there is a natural fit between these values and the ethos of schools with a religious character."

The Coram Life Education 'SCARF' website that we use is password protected. However, there is a section called 'About Us' which introduces the work they do and the research behind their scheme and what they provide to the school.
www.coramlifeeducation.org.uk

Delivery of Relationships Education

RSE will usually be delivered by the class teacher or one of our HLTAs, in mixed gender groups, other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups. Class teachers make choices about ways of working, as appropriate to their own classes and will adapt teaching styles, resources and plans accordingly. As within every subject, staff will be sensitive to: children's cultural backgrounds; learning needs and where necessary or appropriate, liaise with parents and other members of staff within the classroom to ensure the curriculum contact is accessible and appropriate for all children within the class. As previously mentioned, the school follow SCARF's suggested half termly units, as these have been carefully coordinated to ensure that there is thorough coverage of the required objectives. The curriculum is a 'spiral' curriculum which means that there are foundation blocks developed through year



groups, resulting in the end outcome of the statutory requirements being achieved comprehensively by the end of primary school, whilst also delivering a comprehensive, full PSHE programme.

Relationships Education is inclusive for all pupils, sensitive to all family and faith backgrounds and pupils' own identities. It is respectful of all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported to develop the following skills as appropriate to their age:

- Communication skills,
- Forming positive relationships including self-respect as well as respect and empathy for others,
- Recognising and assessing potential risks,
- Assertiveness and managing conflict and difficult emotions.

These skills are taught within the context of family life and friendships, in an age appropriate and accessible way.

RSE should not be delivered in isolation but firmly embedded in relevant curriculum areas. At Overthorpe C of E Academy, the main content is delivered during PSHE lessons (through the SCARF Curriculum) and Science lessons. Developed by teachers and centered on a values-based and 'Growth Mindset' approach, SCARF's online resources support primary schools in promoting positive behaviour, mental health, wellbeing, resilience and achievement. More than just an RSE scheme of work, SCARF supports great learning every day.

The Department for Education has set out guidance on what children must learn by the end of year 6, under a series of themes.

The statutory content as written by the DfE is set out below. Some themes will recur throughout school while others will be taught in the most appropriate years.

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability,
- 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,
- 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,
- 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,
- that marriage* represents a formal and legally recognized commitment of



- two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong,
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

* Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends,
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties,
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded,
- 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,
- how to recognise: who to trust and who not to trust; how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable; how to manage these situations involving conflict and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils should know:

- 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,
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships,
- the conventions of courtesy and manners,
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness,
- 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,
- 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,
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive,
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

Pupils should know:

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not,



- 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,
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them,
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met,
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context),
- 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,
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact,
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know,
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult,
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard,
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so and where to get advice, for example family, school or other sources.

Answering questions

We acknowledge that potentially sensitive or controversial issues will arise as pupils will naturally share information and ask questions. They will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set for Relationships Education. We also acknowledge that children of the same age may be developmentally at different stages leading to differing types of questions or behaviours.

When spontaneous discussions arise, it is guided in a way that reflects the stated school aims and curriculum content for RSE. As a first principle, we answer questions relating to taught, planned curriculum for that age group to the whole class. We answer questions, where appropriate, relating to areas beyond the taught, planned curriculum for that age group, in a sensitive and age-appropriate way, only to the pupil or pupils who have asked the question. If a member of staff is uncertain about the answer to a question, or indeed whether they should answer it, they will seek guidance from the RSE leader or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Questions may be referred to parents/carers if it is not appropriate to answer them in school. We will also use a 'Worry Box' where questions or concerns may be asked anonymously. Children will be asked to write their name on the question but will be assured that their name will not be shared. This should be done just in case issues of a safeguarding nature are mentioned.



How Relationships (and Sex) Education is monitored and evaluated

Assessment

The same high expectations of the quality of pupil's work are expected and maintained throughout the RSE curriculum. The Coram Life Education programme includes comprehensive assessment tools. The assessment tools work alongside the themes of the SCARF half termly units to Year 1 to 6. Assessment is not about passing or failing. The benchmark against which progress is measured is the pupils own starting point.

In each unit there are:

- SCARF progress activities - pre and post unit assessment activity. These are put in books and completed before and after a unit.
- SCARF reflections on learning –pupils reflect on their own learning throughout the course of each unit.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing body

The governing body will approve the Relationships Education policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

The head teacher and RSE Lead

The head teacher and RSE Lead are responsible for ensuring that Relationships Education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education lessons, if applicable.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering Relationships Education in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' family and faith backgrounds,
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships Education, as with any other subject,
- Monitoring children's learning in order to ensure they make progress,
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils including those with SEND,
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non- statutory sex education lessons, if applicable. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching Relationships Education. Staff who have concerns about teaching this subject are encouraged to seek support from the RSE leader or SLT.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in Relationships Education lessons and treat others with respect and sensitivity, as we expect all the time in school.



How the delivery of the content will be made accessible for all pupils

The needs of pupils

We recognise that an interactive approach to RSE will better develop the skills of our pupils and also that it is more likely to meet their needs. We involve pupils in the planning, development and evaluation of their RSE in ways appropriate to their age, stage and development.

We will involve pupils through:

- questionnaires/surveys,
- pupil voice groups formed specifically for RSE,
- older pupils reviewing the RSE programme for younger pupils,
- use of the RSE consultation toolkit,
- pre and post assessment activities for RSE,
- school council meetings,
- full class consultation activities which ensure all pupils have a voice in the process.

Inclusion, equality and diversity

We are required by law to comply with relevant requirements of the [Equality Act 2010](#). All pupils are entitled to quality RSE that helps them build confidence and a positive sense of self, and to stay healthy.

We include all pupils regardless of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, or sexual orientation.

All classes include pupils with different abilities and aptitudes, experiences, religious/cultural backgrounds, gender and sexual identities. To encourage pupils to participate in lessons, teachers will ensure content, approach and use of inclusive language reflects the diversity of the school community and helps each and every pupil to feel valued and included in the classroom.

We promote the needs and interest of all pupils. The school's approaches to teaching and learning take into account all needs of the pupils to ensure all can access the full RSE provision. We promote social learning and expect our pupils to show a high regard for the needs of others. RSE is an important vehicle for addressing controversial and sensitive issues and ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs:

Considerations will be made for:

- religious and cultural diversity,
- differing gender needs and abilities, including SEND,
- diverse sexuality of pupils,
- homophobic/transphobic/biphobic bullying and behaviour,
- pupil's age and physical and emotional maturity,
- pupils who are new to English.

Our policy is sensitive to the needs of different groups. For some pupils, it may be more appropriate for them to be taught particular topics in single gender groups. We will consult parents/carers and pupils both on what is included, and on how it is delivered.



This will help pupils and their families to establish what is appropriate and acceptable for them. Working in single gender groups can considerably ease concerns about RSE, and help to ensure that pupils receive the RSE to which they are entitled. Single gender groups can also help boys and girls to feel safer and less embarrassed about airing issues and discussing relationships. Where single gender groups are used for pupils, they will always be given time after the sessions to come together in a controlled environment to share and discuss what they have learnt, before leaving the classroom.

SEND

Special Educational Needs, high quality Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) is every child's right, no matter what their level of need or ability. Pupils with special educational needs will be given the opportunity to fully participate in RSE lessons a differentiated program will be provided, where necessary, to ensure that all pupils gain a full understanding. The guidance acknowledges the need for flexibility, to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of children at different developmental stages. Individual cases will be sensitively discussed on a one-to-one basis. Consultation with the pupil (if appropriate) parents and any outside agencies that may be involved will ensure personalised programmes meet the need of the pupil and their family.

The SENDCo in school will take the lead in engaging with parents / carers to meet the requirements set out in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

Ethnicity, religion and cultural diversity

Equalities and Diversity Schools, like all public institutions, have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. All RSE is taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities such as those contained within the Equality Act (2010). The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSE will not influence the teaching of the subject in school. At Overthorpe C of E Academy, we aim to value and celebrate religious, ethnic and cultural diversity as part of modern Britain. We will explore different cultural beliefs and values and encourage activities that challenge stereotypes and discrimination and present children with accurate information based on the law.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Plus (LGBT+)

We have a clear duty under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that our teaching is accessible to all pupils, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning or any other sexual identity (LGBTQ+). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice, including homophobia, and promote understanding and respect, enabling us to meet the requirements, and live the intended spirit, of the Equality Act 2010.

We will deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation and identity, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity, need to feel that RSE is relevant to them. Teachers will never assume that all intimate relationships are between opposite sexes. Information will be inclusive and will include LGBT people in stories, scenarios and role-plays. We will ensure all pupils can



explore topics from a different gender's point of view, and a variety of activities, including practical tasks, discussions, group activities and competitions. We will also ensure that our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content.

Pupils who are new to English

The school will take into account the language skills of individual pupils, ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the RSE provision and resources.

Parental concerns and withdrawal of students

Parents' Right to Withdraw

- Parents do have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE, but we do advise against this and will always be available to discuss concerns.
- Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from statutory relationships education, health education or the science curriculum.
- Parents wanting to withdraw their children are invited to speak to the Headteacher and / or the RSE leader. If a parent still wishes to withdraw the child, requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

Statutory aspects of Sex Education within the National Curriculum Science

All schools must teach the following as part of the National Curriculum Science; parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child/children from this.

National Curriculum Science:

<p>Key Stage 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense, • notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults, • describe the importance for humans of hygiene. 	<p>Key Stage 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird, • describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals, • describe the changes as humans develop to old age.
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The law states (Education Act 1996) that 'schools must teach the biological elements of the RSE in the National Curriculum.'

*"The national curriculum for science also 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."*

*"It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively...It (the sex education programme) 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.**"

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of Relationships Education is monitored by the Headteacher, SLT and the PSHE / RSE lead through planning scrutiny, learning walks, pupil interviews and staff feedback. Pupils' development in Relationships Education is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed and updated by the PSHE lead annually. It will be reviewed by the governing body every three years.

All staff members and governors have access to the RSE policy. Copies are available from the school office, on request, from parents and it is also available on the school website.

Sources of Further Information

This policy has drawn on:

- DfES 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' (2000)
- Brook, Sex Education Forum and PSHE Association 'Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) for the 21st Century' - Supplementary advice to the Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfE (0116/2000) (2011)
- DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance (July 2019)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Schools Equality, diversity and inclusion policy
- DfE Keeping children safe in education (2024)