Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

Spring 2026

Author/Reviewing member of staff	Miss Constable and Mrs Bennett
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Contents

1. Aims

2. Statutory requirements

3. Policy development

4. Definition

5. Curriculum

6. Delivery of RSE

7. Roles and responsibilities

8. Parents' right to withdraw

9. Training

10. Monitoring arrangements

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Appendix 2: By the end of KS2

Appendix 2: By the end of Year 7

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education 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

At Westacre, we value the 6 R's: responsibility, resilience, readiness, reflectivity, reasoning and resourcefulness. RSE lessons support children, making them ready to comprehend the changes that happen to them during puberty. RSE also helps children to reflect on healthy relationships, whilst respecting diversity.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained middle school, we must provide relationships education to all Key Stage 2 pupils, as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

However, we are not required to provide sex education, but 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.

For our Key Stage 3 pupils, in Year 7, we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSHE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At Westacre Middle School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

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:

1. Review – a 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/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSHE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Definition

RSE stands for Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships (including friendships and families), sexual health, sexuality, 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; it is about the promotion of self-esteem, self-respect, healthy relationships and respecting diversity.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per the table below, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed 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.

RSE is taught through the PSHE curriculum, in conjunction with the compulsory Science curriculum.

Year 5	Year 6	Year 7
Respecting others with different opinions or beliefs Different family structures Positive and negative friendships, and how to fix friendships Changes as humans develop Changes experienced in puberty Keeping clean	Respecting others with different opinions or beliefs Different family structures Body changes during puberty (periods and wet dreams) Different types of relationships, including "crushes" How a baby is conceived and born Bullying, including online bullying, and how to report it	Making friends and what to do when friendships go wrong Relationships and relationship expectations Keeping safe- resisting negative peer pressure and legal restrictions on relationships Different family structures Personal body image, self-esteem and keeping clean
	Healthy friendships Online privacy and data storage	Stereotyping- negative images and why they are so damaging Sexual intercourse and reproduction Basic contraception

For more information about our curriculum, please contact your child's Head of Year.

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 may be included in Religion and Worldviews (R&W).

Lessons are primarily taught by the class teacher. The positive relationship between pupils and their teachers is essential for an open and honest discussion of the RSE topics and all students will receive the same lesson coverage. Mostly, the whole class will learn together.

KS2 and KS3 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
  - Intimate and sexual relationships
  - Basic sexual health (KS3 – Year 7)

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 2.

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 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).

7. Roles and responsibilities

1.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSHE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

1.2 The Head teacher

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

1.3 Staff

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/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 headteacher, in order to develop appropriate skills and approaches.

Staff will deliver scientifically accurate information, respectfully explore feelings and emotions, and follow safeguarding protocol whenever required. Staff will remain professional, impartial and will not disclose personal experiences.

1.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. During a discussion, pupils are expected to respect the opinions of others and are

welcome to contribute their views.

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/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

The Science curriculum prescribes that KS2 pupils learn:

- Life processes common to humans and other animals including nutrition, growth and reproduction
- About the main stages of the human life cycle

The Science curriculum prescribes that KS3 pupils learn significantly more content, in greater detail, but as a middle school, we have selected the following elements as age appropriate for Year 7:

- reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.
- the effects of recreational drugs (including substance misuse) on behaviour, health and life processes.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

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

9. Training

Staff are trained in the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is mainly monitored by our Science Lead (Laura Bennett) and PSHE Lead (Laura Constable) in conjunction with Deputy Head, Catherine Doolin, and at times may also be monitored through pupil voice and staff collegial feedback.

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

This policy will be reviewed by Science Lead (Laura Bennett) in conjunction with the PSE lead (Laura Constable). At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body.

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Relationships and sex education curriculum map

Appendix 2: By the end of KS2

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	• 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 recognised 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
Caring friendships	• 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, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
TOPIC 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	• 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	• 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 • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2: By the end of Year 7

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
TOPIC Online and media	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW • Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and how these can affect current and future relationships
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• **How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust and shared interests** • **That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental health and wellbeing** • **The facts about basic contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available** • **How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment**

Appendix 3: 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, sex and health 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	