



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date of policy: September 2025

Member of staff responsible: Sam Taylor (Assistant Head and Curriculum Lead) and Emma Shields (PSHE/RSE Lead)

Review date: September 2026

Introduction

An amendment to the Children and Social Work Act 2017 made **Relationships and Health Education** at primary; and Relationships, Sex, and Health Education at secondary, statutory subjects. The DfE guidance on Relationships, Health and Sex Education for governing bodies can be seen [here](#). **This became active from September 2020.**

We are confident at Smith's Wood Primary Academy, that our curriculum covers all aspects of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) within the context of a full PSHE programme in an age-appropriate way. Should changes to these curriculum areas occur in the future, we will ensure all statutory duties are fulfilled.

This Relationships and Sex Education policy is also informed by DfE guidance on Relationships, Sex and Health Education (as above), [preventing and tackling bullying](#) (Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies, July 2013, updated 2017), [safeguarding](#) (Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, March 2013 and [Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2019](#))

The RSE Programme meets all the outcomes in the PSHE Association Programmes of Study, 2017.

Definition of Relationships and Sex and Education (RSE)

From September 2020, Relationships Education is compulsory for all primary schools as set out in the DfE Guidance (2019). For all maintained schools there is also a statutory duty to provide Health Education. This includes primary aged children learning about the '*changing adolescent body*', included in the expected outcomes for primary Health Education. (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education, DfE, 2019).

Smith's Wood Primary Academy, like all primary schools, is legally obliged to have an up-to-date policy for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) that describes the content and organisation of RSE. **At Smith's Wood we have taken the decision to teach sex education beyond Relationships and Health Education and National Curriculum Science, and therefore the content which will be taught in our school is detailed in this policy.** This policy is available to parents/carers on request and is also available on the school's website. It is the school governors' responsibility to ensure that this policy is developed and implemented effectively.

Effective Relationships and Sex Education can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain relationships. It also enables

children and young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being. This is why the DfE recommend:

“... that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. It 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.” (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education, DfE, 2019, para 67).

Compulsory aspects of Relationships and Sex Education.

End of primary expectations and curriculum content is given in the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education DfE guidance (2019). At Smith's Wood Primary Academy, this is taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Our school delivers this content as part of the whole programme of Jigsaw PSHE.

The sex education contained in National Curriculum science (Key Stages 1–4) is compulsory in maintained schools.

- 'All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes' (1.13)
- Children should learn 'how a baby is conceived and born' before they leave primary school (1.16)

RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. It also teaches them about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and positive mental health, about online and off line safety. Here at Smith's Wood, we have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38).

- Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is an important part of PSHE Education (DfE, 2014).
- When any school provides RSE they must have regard to the Secretary of States guidance; this is a statutory duty. Ofsted will evaluate how schools help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for their children (Ofsted, 2019, Education Inspection Framework Para 28).
- It is compulsory for all maintained schools to teach the parts of sex education that fall under National Curriculum Science which must be taught to all pupils of primary and secondary age e.g. the biological aspects of puberty and reproduction (Education Act 1996, National Curriculum 2014).

Updated government safeguarding guidance is now available (Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024).

RSE has clear links with our other school policies aimed at promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Education Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Policy and Safe Internet Use Policy

- Inclusion Policy
- RE Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy
- Science Policy
- SMSC Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

Staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

The role of the Principal and Governing body

It is the responsibility of our Governors to ensure that as well as fulfilling their legal obligations, they also make sure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes in regard to RSE;
- RSE is well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- the quality of RSE provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

The Principal liaises with external agencies regarding the school RSE programme and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework. The Principal monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy. Parents are consulted on the RSE policy and have the opportunity to express their views. They are also informed of the limits of their right to withdraw their child from sex education and have the opportunity to do so within these limits.

Monitoring and Review

The governing body, the Principal, the SLT and PSHE subject leader monitor the RSE policy on an annual basis and report their findings and recommendations if the policy needs modification. The school gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the Principal to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the RSE programme that is taught in our school. Governors scrutinise materials to check they are in accordance with the school's ethos. Parents and carers have the right to see sample materials used within the teaching of RSE and can do so by prior appointment with a member of staff, or at any open evening the school chooses to hold about this curriculum area.

Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered; therefore, we ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Smith's Wood Primary Academy has a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people. Inclusive RSE fosters good relations between pupils, tackles all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promotes understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE, 2014b).

We have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act, 2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2006) and Section 4.2 of the national curriculum (2014) states “Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment.”

“Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all pupils.” (DfE, 2019)

‘Relationships’ curriculum content taught at Smith’s Wood through the Jigsaw PSHE programme

The grid below shows **specific Relationships content** for each year group:

Age	
4-5	Family life; friendships; breaking friendships; falling out; dealing with bullying; being a good friend.
5-6	Understanding bullying and knowing how to deal with it; celebrating differences between people; making new friends; belonging to a family; being a good friend; physical contact preferences; people who help us; qualities as a friend and person; being a good friend to myself; celebrating special relationships;
6-7	Assumptions and stereotypes about gender; understanding bullying; standing up for self and others; making new friends; gender diversity; celebrating difference and remaining friends; learning with others; group co-operation; different types of family; physical contact boundaries; friendship and conflict; secrets (including those that might worry us); trust and appreciation; expressing appreciation for special relationships;
7-8	Seeing things from others’ perspectives; families and their differences; family conflict and how to manage it (child-centred); witnessing bullying and how to solve it; recognising how words can be hurtful; giving and receiving compliments; respect for myself and others; healthy and safe choices; family roles and responsibilities; friendship and negotiation; keeping safe online and who to go to for help; being a global citizen; being aware of how my choices affect others; awareness of how other children have different lives; expressing appreciation for family and friends;
8-9	Challenging assumptions; judging by appearance; accepting self and others; understanding influences; understanding bullying including the role of the bystander; problem-solving in relationships; identifying how special and unique everyone is; first impressions; working in a group; celebrating contributions of others; healthier friendships; group dynamics; assertiveness; peer pressure; celebrating inner strength; jealousy; love and loss; memories of loved ones; getting on and falling out; girlfriends and boyfriends; showing appreciation to people and animals.
9-10	Cultural differences and how they can cause conflict; racism; rumours and name-calling; types of bullying; material wealth and happiness; enjoying and respecting other cultures; self-recognition and self-worth; building self-esteem; safer online communities; rights and

responsibilities online; online gaming and gambling; reducing screen time; dangers of online grooming; SMART internet safety rules.

10-11 Children's universal rights; feeling welcome and valued; choices, consequences and rewards; group dynamics; democracy, having a voice; anti-social behaviour; role-modelling; perceptions of normality; understanding disability; power struggles; understanding bullying; inclusion/exclusion; differences as conflict; difference as celebration; empathy; mental health; identifying mental health worries and sources of support; love and loss; managing feelings; power and control; assertiveness; technology safety; take responsibility with technology use.

'Sex Education' curriculum content taught at Smith's Wood through the Jigsaw PSHE programme

The grid below shows **specific Sex Education content** for each year group:

Indicates overlap with the compulsory National Curriculum Science

Age

4-5	Bodies (NOT including names of sexual parts); respecting my body and looking after it e.g. personal hygiene; growing up; growth and change; fun and fears; celebrations.
5-6	Life cycles – animal and human; changes in me; changes since being a baby; differences between female and male bodies (correct terminology: penis, vagina, testicles, vulva); respecting my body and understand which parts are private; linking growing and learning; coping with change; transition.
6-7	Life cycles in nature; growing from young to old; increasing independence; differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology); assertiveness; appreciate that some parts of my body are private; preparing for transition.
7-8	How babies grow; understanding a baby's needs; outside body changes at puberty ; inside body changes at puberty ; family stereotypes; challenging my ideas; preparing for transition.
8-9	Being unique; having a baby (simple explanation of conception) ; girls and puberty ; boys and puberty ; confidence in change; accepting change; preparing for transition.
9-10	Self and body image; influence of online and media on body image; puberty for girls ; puberty for boys ; conception (including IVF) ; growing responsibility; coping with change; preparing for transition.
10-11	Self-image, body image; puberty and feelings ; conception to birth ; reflections about change; physical attraction; respect and consent; boyfriends/girlfriends; sexting; transition.

Withdrawal from RSE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education provided at Smith's Wood except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum Science and that are included within Statutory Relationships and Health Education. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the Principal (or nominated representative) in school who will explore any concerns and clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The benefits of receiving this important education will be discussed and also, any detrimental effects that withdrawal may have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child.

Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the specific sex education lessons until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Parents and carers cannot withdraw from any aspect of Relationships Education and also in maintained schools, Health Education lessons covering the changing adolescent body (puberty).

Working with parents and carers

The government guidance on Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, 2019) emphasises the importance of schools working in partnership with parents and carers.

Parents/carers are aware that at Smith's Wood we are legally required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Sex and relationships topics can arise incidentally in other subjects, such as Science, Geography, History, RE, and it is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions. Parents are given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships and Sex Education. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach increases confidence in our curriculum.

How is Relationship and Sex education organised in our school?

At Smith's Wood the Jigsaw PSHE Programme brings together PSHE Education, emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Jigsaw is designed as a whole school approach, with all year groups working on the same theme at the same time. This enables each theme to generate a whole school focus for adults and children alike.

The two themes in Jigsaw that cover Relationship and Sex Education are the 'Relationships' unit and the 'Changing Me' unit. Each lesson has two Learning Intentions: one is based on specific PSHE learning (covering the non-statutory national framework for PSHE Education and the statutory Relationships and Health Education guidance, but enhanced to address children's needs today); and one is based on emotional literacy and social skills development to enhance children's emotional and mental health. The enhancements mean that the Jigsaw PSHE programme is relevant to children living in today's world as it helps them understand and be equipped to cope with issues like body image, cyber and homophobic bullying, and internet safety. Every lesson contributes to at least one of these aspects of children's development. This is mapped on each lesson and balanced across each year group.

- All class teachers are responsible for the delivery of both Relationships and Sex Education in their classes.

- The PSHE/RSE Lead (Emma Shields) and the Curriculum lead (Sam Taylor) along with SLT are responsible for the monitoring and evaluation of the Relationship and Sex Education taught at Smith's Wood.

Differentiation/SEN

Our curriculum for Relationship and Sex Education is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of our philosophy. However, teachers at Smith's Wood will, as always, tailor each lesson to meet the needs of the particular children in their classes. Our school ensures that the teaching and materials are appropriate having regard to the age and any religious background of our pupils. We also recognise the significance of other factors, such as any special educational needs or disabilities. To support this differentiation, many lessons include creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that sometimes disclosures may be made during Relationship and Sex Education lessons; in which case, safeguarding procedures are followed immediately. Sometimes it is clear that certain children may need time to talk one-to-one after the lesson closes. We ensure that the time and appropriate staffing is available for this to happen. If disclosures occur, the school's disclosure and confidentiality policy is followed.

Assessment

Teachers ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their Relationship and Sex Education. Therefore, each unit of work has a built-in assessment task, usually in Lesson 6. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment, but also offers children the chance to assess their own learning and have a conversation with the teacher about their two opinions. In addition, children can complete a self/peer assessment that accompanies each lesson. All assessed work is collated in school PSHE books.

Each unit of work has a set of three level descriptors for each year group:

Working towards

Working at

Working beyond

Recording and tracking progress

Smith's Wood Primary Academy uses 'Educator', a computerised tracking system to record and track progress across the curriculum. We are currently in the process of setting up Jigsaw's assessment statements in this way on Educator to track progress across all aspects of PSHE, including Relationship and Sex Education.

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Each Unit's assessment tasks, attainment and children's books assist the teacher in reporting meaningful learning progress to parents/carers. The descriptors are used as a starting point when considering what to write on children's reports.

The Attainment Descriptors

These attainment descriptors are specific to Jigsaw PSHE and to year groups. They are designed and used by our school to give guidance when considering each child's progress. They are **not** nationally-recognised. There are no national level descriptors for PSHE.

The Smith's Wood philosophy is that children are praised and their achievements celebrated in every lesson. It demands a positive relationship between the teacher and the children which, in itself, values and celebrates each individual. Appropriate time is allocated for this process.

Monitoring and evaluation

The PSHE/RSE Lead (Emma Shields) and the Curriculum lead (Sam Taylor) will monitor delivery of the programme through evidence recorded in books, observation and discussion with teaching staff to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness will be conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience

External contributors

External contributors from the community, e.g. health promotion specialists and school nurses make a valuable contribution to the Relationship and Sex Education programme. Their input is carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the curriculum. Class teachers are always present during these sessions and remain responsible for the delivery of the Relationship and Sex Education.

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital to Relationship and Sex Education. To enable this, 'ground rules' are agreed and owned at the beginning of the year and are reinforced in every lesson – by using The Jigsaw Charter. It includes the aspects below:

The Jigsaw Charter

- We take turns to speak
- We use kind and positive words
- We listen to each other
- We have the right to pass
- We only use names when giving compliments or when being positive
- We respect each other's privacy (confidentiality)

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers at Smith's Wood are prepared to handle personal issues arising from the lessons, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

Answering Difficult Questions and Sensitive Issues

Staff members are aware that views around RSE-related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias using the Jigsaw programme. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion.

Both formal and informal RSE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to one of the Child Protection Leads if they are concerned.

Our school believes that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support. In lessons that cover RSE provision, this should be regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation and gender diversity, answer appropriate questions and offer support. LGBT and bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

Consulting parents and carers

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for our Relationship and Sex Education curriculum. Parents and carers are given the opportunity to find out about and discuss the programme through:

- * Parents'/carers' evenings
- * Information newsletter during Summer term
- * Explanatory letter during Summer term
- * Involvement in curriculum development

Pupil Consultation:

- Pupils are consulted on their own personal, social and citizenship development. Pupils are asked in individual class lessons and through the school council (SWAG) what sort of person they would like to be by the time they leave this school; what qualities, skills, attitudes, values are important to them as people.
- This is developed further by pupils being asked how they feel the school could support them with this, what initiatives the school could implement e.g. friendship benches, peer mentoring systems.

Training and support for staff

All staff benefit from PSHE training at staff meetings in order to enhance their Relationship and Sex Education delivery skills. Opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.

In addition to this, support for teaching and understanding Relationship and Sex Education issues is incorporated in our staff INSET programme, drawing on staff expertise and a range of external agencies.

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.

Confidentiality and Child Protection/Safeguarding Issues

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to a named child protection Lead who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. All staff members are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the members of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.