

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy

Governing Body approval gained in January 2026

Next review January 2027

Policy proposed for adoption by Matt Johnson, Headteacher

Headteacher's signature:

Chair of Governor's signature:

This policy is set out to explain how and why Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught at Copnor Primary School.

Policy Availability

The policy is available to parents and carers through documentation being readily available to download on the school website. If you require this policy in printed format, please contact the school office.

Rationale

We believe that, to be effective, RSE should always be taught within a broader Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme (please refer to the separate PSHE policy for further details). RSE enhances and is enhanced by learning related to topics including anti-bullying; keeping safe on and off line; keeping physically and mentally healthy; learning about drugs, alcohol and tobacco; and the development of skills and attributes, such as communication skills, managing peer pressure, risk management, resilience and decision making. RSE gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships, while staying safe both online and offline.

Definition

RSE is part of lifelong learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It enables pupils to explore their own and other's attitudes and values and builds their self-esteem and confidence to view their own sexuality positively. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity and it is always age-appropriate.

The aims of Relationships and Sex Education

- Help pupils to identify the characteristics of healthy relationships; how relationships may affect mental and physical health; and how to stay safe online.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Inform pupils about human reproduction.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

We believe that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law.

Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the PSHE curriculum, however, some biological aspects of sex education are taught within the science curriculum. At Copnor Primary School, we have followed guidance from the PSHE Association to develop our own PSHE programme of study for Years 1-6, which includes RSE and drugs and alcohol lessons (see appendix 1). We believe that pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up and educate pupils in establishing and maintaining healthy relationships. Lessons will be taught by class teachers in mixed gender groups other than when it is deemed more appropriate for topics to be covered in single sex groups. PSHE Ground Rules are used in all PSHE and RSE lessons, having been set at the start of the year by the class and teacher and reviewed regularly as a class.

Early Years and Foundation Stage

In Early Years, Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is a prime area of learning therefore an integral aspect of daily planning, teaching and learning. Making relationships is one of the areas of PSED focused upon, with the expectation that they think about the perspective of others and build constructive relationships.

Key Stage One and Two

RSE builds year on year, starting with the children naming the parts of their body and how actions have consequences in Year 1, through to discussing what makes a positive, healthy relationship, that forcing anyone to marry is a crime and learning about human reproduction in Year 6.

Pupils with SEND, including the More Able

As far as is appropriate, pupils with special educational needs should follow the same RSE programme as all other students. Careful consideration is given concerning the level of differentiation needed, and in some cases the content or delivery will have to be adapted. Teachers and/or learning support assistants work with individual pupils where required, and if appropriate. It is not the school's policy to withdraw pupils with special educational needs from PSHE education to catch up on other national curriculum subjects: these aspects of personal and social development are as important to all pupils as their academic achievement.

The Right to Withdraw

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary school. Under the new guidance issued by the DfE, from September 2020 Relationships Education at key stages 1 and 2 is statutory. This guidance is available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf

However, sex education is currently not compulsory. The DfE continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils. If a parent/carer wishes their child to be withdrawn from the sex education elements of RSE, they should discuss this with the Headteacher, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. If appropriate, the views of the child will also be considered to ensure that their wishes are understood. The RSE curriculum would be clarified at this time to ensure that parents/carers are clear with regards to what they are and are not withdrawing from.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, Copnor Primary School will respect the request to withdraw the child. The school will provide alternative provision for the child, possibly in another year group for the duration of the sex education lessons. However, the school is unable to prevent children from talking in the playground or outside of school about the lessons they have completed. We will, however, speak to the children about the appropriateness of conversations and being mindful of younger children/ children who have not participated in the lessons. This will be completed in a sensitive way.

Parental involvement

At Copnor Primary School, we strive to inform parents/carers about the best practice known with regard to RSE, so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents and carers give to children at home. Prior to teaching, parents/carers will be invited to a meeting at which the sex education programme of study will be discussed and resources made available to view. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities at home and at school.

Safeguarding Children

When teaching any sensitive topic, such as RSE, which deals with topics such as: family life; safe and appropriate touching; personal body parts; and healthy relationships, we recognise the potential to uncover children's disclosures. All members of staff who deliver any of our RSE have statutory training around safeguarding children. All staff are aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern and are able to record their concerns and report to the appropriate person.

Legislation

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016) and KCSIE 2025
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)