



Inspiring Everyone to Learn

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Person responsible:	PSHE Leader
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Date of next review:	Autumn Term 2023

The Hermitage School's Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy is based on the latest guidance from the DfE.

We believe that effective Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is important to ensure that children grow up being:

- Informed about and comfortable with the changes during puberty.
- Able to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships.
- Being emotionally safe, supported and sexually healthy.

Our approach to the teaching and learning of RSE is that it should be:

- Factually accurate, evidence-based and age-appropriate.
- Be sensitive to faith and cultural perspectives.
- Promote equality, inclusion and acceptance of diversity.
- Promote strong and stable relationships and friendships.
- Provide children and young people with a clear sense of rights and responsibilities.

Policy statement

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is learning about our bodies, health and relationships; with a particular focus on puberty and growing up, sexual health, sexual intimacy, dealing with emotions and managing personal relationships. It is set in the context of clear values, including the value of family life, marriage and of loving and stable relationships in bringing up children. RSE is taught gradually, so that learning can be built up year-by-year in a way that is appropriate to the age and maturity of each child; responds to the needs they have, and enable them to successfully manage the challenges they face as they grow up.

RSE makes an essential and significant contribution to safeguarding children and young people during their school-age years and into the future. This compulsory curriculum should enable young people to develop skills and confidence to access professional advice and appropriate health services. It enables children to understand their physical and emotional

development and to take increasing responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and that of others.

Aims and Objectives

To give each pupil the knowledge, skills and understanding to lead confident, healthy and independent lives in order to become informed, active and responsible citizens. Specifically, we will aim to enable pupils to explore and discuss the following values and attitudes as part of the overall moral development of children:

- Mutual respect.
- The value of family life, marriage and of loving and stable relationships in bringing up children.
- Rights and responsibilities, for self and others.
- Commitment to safety and wellbeing.
- Gender equality.
- Acceptance of diversity.
- That violence and coercion in relationships are unacceptable and how to manage this safely and effectively.

We aim to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding at appropriate stages by:

- Learning and understanding emotional and physical development.
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Understanding the positive benefits of loving, rewarding, and responsible relationships.
- Learning about support services available.

We aim to teach the following personal and social skills so that children can begin to make informed decisions and life choices, including:

- Learning to identify their own emotions and those of others.
- Managing emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of decisions made.
- Coping with and resisting unwelcome peer pressure.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to identify risk.
- Recognising and avoiding exploitation and abuse.
- Asking for help and accessing advice.

Our Approach to Teaching and Learning in RSE

RSE is taught through a spiral curriculum which reinforces learning at different ages within the PSHE curriculum. Topics are taught either discreetly in separate PSHE lessons or through other curriculum subjects, especially through the Science National Curriculum e.g. changes in the growing body, and reproduction. RSE is mainly taught through a discussion format encouraging speaking and listening skills and developing co-operation skills in working together.

RSE takes place within mixed sex classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant, with a year team teacher. Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that pupils are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected on the basis of their appropriateness to pupils.

The Hermitage School uses the SCARF programme to support teaching and learning of RSE. This provides the framework for a whole-school approach to improving children's wellbeing and progress in making healthy choices, based on five values: Safety (S), Caring (C), Achievement (A), Resilience (R) and Friendship (F).

The SCARF Relationships and Sex Education resources help children and young people to be safe, healthy and happy, both as they grow, and in their future lives. Delivered as part of PSHE, this programme enables the school to meet our current requirements, as well as ensuring we meet the requirements of the DfE Primary Relationships Education and Health Education Curriculum, and National Curriculum Science from 2020.

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). Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions.

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.

Primary sex education will focus on:

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

RSE is taught throughout the school appropriate to the age and maturity of the pupils. Parents/carers may be sent further information prior to the teaching of specific units of work in Year 5 and 6.

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.

Dealing with Questions

Teachers will aim to respond to pupils' questions as they arise, in an age appropriate manner and dependant on the needs of the children and the class. If a question raises cause for concern about safeguarding, the teacher will discuss this with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in confidence to agree next steps in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Content

Pupils learn to express their opinions about relationships and to listen to and support others, including respecting other people's viewpoints and beliefs.

They learn to recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves and try to balance the stresses in life in order to promote their own mental health and wellbeing, as well as that of others. Life processes are discussed including the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them.

Visits and visitors

Visits both off and on site involving outside agencies greatly enhance the teaching and learning in RSE e.g. the Life Bus visits, school nurse visits and the Junior Citizenship day in Year 6.

Visitors are briefed about their contribution and appropriate conduct and teaching staff are always present when visitors talk to children. Staff evaluate all visits and activities to inform future practice.

Ground rules and distancing techniques

Teachers are careful to ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes do not influence the teaching of RSE. To this end ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach. There are clear parameters as to what will be taught in whole class setting and what will be dealt with on an individual basis.

- Pupils will be given preparation so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Moral and Values Framework

The RSE programme at The Hermitage School reflects, demonstrates and encourages the following values:

- Respect for self.
- Respect for others.
- Responsibility for their own actions.
- Responsibility for their family, friends, schools and wider community.

Withdrawal

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the Relationship and Sex Education provided at school except for those parts that are a compulsory part of the

National Curriculum for Science. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to speak to the class teacher in the first instance, who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. The parent/carer must then provide a written request to the Headteacher for their child to be withdrawn. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Confidentiality

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 must consult the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead, who may confer with the Headteacher before any decision is made. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by a member of staff throughout the process.

Child Protection

The school has a separate Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. Effective RSE may bring about disclosures of child protection issues and all staff must be aware of the procedures for reporting their concerns.

Controversial and Sensitive Issues

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

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

The Hermitage School believes that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively.

Equal Opportunities Statement

The Hermitage School is committed to the provision of RSE to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions when pupils with Special Educational Needs are given extra support from SEN staff.