

Policy Name	Relationships and Sexual Education (RSE)
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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) 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

Our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum at New Avenue School is woven into our ethos of inclusivity, holistic support, and positive relationships. Through RSE, we create a safe and supportive space for sensitive discussions, empower pupils with knowledge about puberty and sexual development, nurture self-respect, confidence, and empathy, foster a positive culture surrounding sexuality and relationships, and equip pupils with the language to express themselves effectively.

These efforts are grounded in our commitment to ensuring every pupil feels respected, valued, and empowered to thrive in our school community.

2. Statutory Requirements

At New Avenue School, we must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

We don't have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science. This would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

3. Policy Development

This policy will be developed through consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process will involve the following steps:

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

4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, 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.

5. Curriculum

We have devised the curriculum in principle, but will consult with parents/carers, pupils and staff. The curriculum considers the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

Primary sex education will focus on:

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

For more information about our curriculum, see our PSHE Curriculum Plan. Appendices 1 and 2 cover what pupils should know at the end of both their primary and secondary phases of school.

6. Delivery of RSE

There are two strands to our PSHE offering: core and personal development. We employ this model to ensure we cover the critical and mandatory content (including RSE) is covered. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Based on the content within this, New Avenue School delivers Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) through a comprehensive and integrated approach embedded within the broader curriculum offer:

- **Integrated Topics:** RSE is integrated into various PSHE units such as "Growing Up," "It's My Body," "Healthy Lifestyles," and "Self-Care, Support, and Safety," ensuring that discussions around relationships and sexual health are contextualized within broader themes of personal development, well-being, and safety.
- **Developmental Progression:** The delivery of RSE is structured to reflect the developmental needs and maturity levels of pupils, with topics like "Growing Up" and "Changing and Growing" addressing age-appropriate aspects of sexual development and puberty.
- **Social Skills and Communication:** Elements of RSE are also incorporated into units focused on social skills, communication, and empathy, such as "Talkabout (Social Skills)" and "Effective Communication," emphasizing the importance of respectful relationships and effective communication in personal and social contexts.
- **Health and Well-being:** RSE is linked with units addressing physical and mental health, including "Healthy Lifestyles," "Self-Care, Support, and Safety," and "Managing Feelings," underscoring the holistic approach to well-being and the interconnectedness of physical, emotional, and social aspects of health.
- **Safety and Boundaries:** Themes of safety, consent, and boundaries are woven throughout units like "Safety First," "It's My Body," and "Managing my Finances," emphasizing the importance of personal safety, self-advocacy, and understanding one's rights and responsibilities.
- **Cultural and Global Perspectives:** RSE is explored within a broader context of diversity and global awareness, with units like "Diverse Britain," "One World," and "Other Cultures and Religions" fostering respect for different perspectives, identities, and cultural norms related to relationships and sexuality.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
- Safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:

- A whole-class setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance

- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Use of External Agencies

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with pupils' developmental stage

Comply with:

- This policy
 - The Teachers' Standards
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
 - Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
 - Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
 - Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
 - Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
 - Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
 - Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
 - Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
 - Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
 - Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
 - Share all external materials with parents and carers

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The governing board

The governing board has delegated the approval of this policy to Anthony Merriman.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils (see section 9).

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/carers 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.

The PSHE Lead for the school is Anthony Merriman.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

For those who are primary aged, parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education.

For those who are secondary aged, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

10. Training

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

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

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The delivery of RSE is monitored by SLT through:

- QA cycle of Quality of Education

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

This policy will be reviewed by Anthony Merriman annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by headteacher, before being ratified by the governing board.

Updates

Dates	Comments
3.2.25	Appendix 1, 2 and 3 added

Pupils should know... By the end of Primary

Families and people who care for 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 to 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 2 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, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, 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 and how to manage this situation, how to manage conflict, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed

Respectful relationships

The importance of respecting others, even when they're 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 the wider world they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show 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're not

That the same principles apply to online relationships as face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online (even when we're 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've never met

How information and data is shared and used online

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's not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe)

Pupils should know... By the end of Primary

That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate/unsafe physical and other contact

How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) who they don't 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're heard

How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so

Where to get advice (e.g. family, school, other sources)

Sex education

The changes that adolescence brings for boys and girls

Drawing on knowledge from science lessons, how a baby is conceived and born

Pupils should know...by the end of secondary

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 its 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 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)
- How to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed

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, the management of conflict and 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)

Pupils should know...by the end of secondary

That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show respect to others, including people in positions of authority, and tolerance of other people's beliefs

About different types of bullying (including cyber-bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying 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 references to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

Online and media

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 wouldn't 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

That specifically sexually explicit material (e.g. pornography) presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners

That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail

How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online

Being Safe

The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation, and how these can affect current and future relationships

How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy 1-to-1 intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship

That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively (e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing)

The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women

That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others

That they have a choice to delay sex or enjoy intimacy without sex

The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available

The facts around pregnancy, including miscarriage

That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)

How the different sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDs are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing

About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment

How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour

How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health and advice and treatment

Appendix 3 - Withdrawal from sex education form

To be completed by parents			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reasons why you wish to withdraw your child from non-statutory elements of sex education			
Is there anything you would like the school to consider?			
Parent signature			

To be completed by the school

Agreed action as discussed with parents

Head Teachers' signature

