

Introduction to RSE

What is the purpose of RSE?

- ▶ To put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships in all contexts (including online) with a focus on families and friendships
- ▶ To understand how to treat each other respectfully and with kindness
- ▶ To know and understand what is appropriate and inappropriate including physical contact
- ▶ To know what a healthy relationship is
- ▶ Understand that there are many types of families and that there should be no stigmatisation attached to a child's family life or home situation
- ▶ For pupils to be able to recognise and report when they are a victim of abuse - emotional, sexual and physical

By the end of Primary

Families and people who care for me

Pupils should know:

- ▶ 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
- ▶ Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious.

Caring friendships

Pupils should know:

- ▶ 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

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

Pupils should know:

- ▶ 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

Being safe

Pupils should know:

- ▶ 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, for example family, school or other sources

What is our RSE curriculum based on

- ▶ Statutory guidance - Relationship and sex education (RSE) and health education

Key Points from the Statutory Guidance

3. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.⁴ They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

4. This guidance also sets out both the rights of parents/carers⁵ to withdraw pupils from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education) and the process that head teachers should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

57. From the beginning, teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

58. The principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers should address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.

59. Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.

62. Through Relationships Education (and RSE), schools should teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. In primary schools, this can be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

65. The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools and the content set out in this guidance therefore focuses on Relationships Education.

66. The content set out in this guidance covers everything that primary schools should teach about relationships and health, including puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. It will be for primary schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. Many primary schools already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so, although it is not a requirement.

Commonly asked questions

- ▶ Pupils will learn from the beginning of school that there are different types of families - male/female, same sex, single parents, families with step parents, families with members who are carers, families with adopted children, etc
- ▶ Pupils are taught about healthy relationships in the context of friendships and their family not romantic relationships
- ▶ The school does not teach pupils about different genders in line with government guidance for primary schools
- ▶ The school does not promote one type of family circumstance or relationship but that we should have respect for all family types
- ▶ It is important for pupils to know the scientific names for private parts - so they can explain if they have a medical issue or there is inappropriate contact
- ▶ It is compulsory for the school to teach about puberty
- ▶ Sex Education lessons are not compulsory however in science pupils do learn about asexual reproduction and sexual reproduction