



Osborne
Co-operative Academy Trust



Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education policy

Thameside Primary School

Last reviewed: September 2023
Next review date: September 2026

Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust is a multi-academy trust (MAT) incorporated around the principles and values of the international co-operative movement. These are Equality, Equity, Democracy, Self-help, Self-Responsibility and Solidarity, along with the ethical values of openness, honesty, social responsibility and caring for others. These values and principles underpin all our actions.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Our school's policy on relationship and sex education is based on the DfES document 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (DfE 25/06/2019). We recognise 'Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' as the policy's full title, but, for brevity's sake, we will refer in the rest of this policy simply to 'RSE'. Within this policy the term RSE is to be read as: Relationships Education and Relationships, Sex Education and health education.
- 1.2 In the DfE document, RSE puts 'in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy.'
- 1.3 RSE is part of the personal, social and health education curriculum in our school, which we refer to as PSHE. When we inform our pupils through sex education about sexual issues, we do this with regard to morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation.

2. 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
- Create a culture of respect for other people's view

3. Context

As a Primary academy school, we must provide relationship education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. As a school we are required to teach Science which would include elements of sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code, and of the values which underpin all our work. We teach sex education on the understanding that:

- it is taught in the context of committed relationships and family life.
- it is part of a wider process of social, personal, spiritual and moral education.
- children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies.
- children should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity.
- it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect.
- children need to learn the importance of self-control.

- children understand the need to live a healthy lifestyle and how this can be achieved.

4. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils, governors and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review- designated PSHE lead pulled together all relevant information including relevant national, local guidance with Osborne Co-operative Academy Trust consultant.
2. Pupil forum- we investigated what children already knew about relationships and what makes a positive relationship.
3. Staff consultation- all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
4. Parent/stakeholder consultation- parents and carers were invited to attend a meeting regarding the policy and the new RSE government guidelines.
5. Ratification- once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

5. Definition

At Thameside Primary, we define RSE as being 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.

6. Organisation

- 6.1 Under the 2019 DFE guidance for RSE, it is a statutory requirement for pupils to have Relationship Education. Elements of the Sex Education curriculum which are part of science lessons remain statutory e.g. the teaching of the human body and how it develops. Stand-alone Sex Education lessons will be taught to pupils however parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from this.
- 6.2 We teach RSE through different aspects of the school curriculum. While we carry out the main RSE teaching through our personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum, we also teach elements of sex education through other subject areas (e.g. science and PE), which will teach children about the biological aspects of their own bodies and how they change and develop.
- 6.3 (Refer to Appendix 1) Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:
 - Families and people who care for me
 - Caring relationships
 - Respectful relationships
 - Online Relationships
 - Being safe
- 6.4 As part of our PSHE lessons, we teach children about relationships, and we encourage children to discuss issues. We teach about the parts of our bodies

and how these work as well as explaining to the children what will happen to their bodies during puberty. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it.

- 6.5 In science lessons, teachers inform children about puberty and how a baby is born. For this aspect of our teaching, we follow the guidance material in the national scheme of work for science. In Key Stage 1, we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce as well as teaching them about the main parts of the body. Children learn to appreciate the fact that people are not all the same, and that we need to respect each other. In Key Stage 2, we teach about life processes, and the main stages of the human life cycle, in greater depth.
- 6.6 In Years 5 and 6, we place a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is, and how it affects women.
- 6.7 We give the opportunity for all parents and carers of children in Years 5 and 6 to discuss this particular programme of lessons, to explain what the issues are, and how they are taught, and to see materials the school uses in its teaching.**
- 6.8 As part of our Diversity and Values assemblies we instil a nurturing culture of mutual respect for each other regardless of our race, religion, ethnicity or family background.

7 The role of parents and carers

7.1 The school affirms that the primary role in children's RSE lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents and carers of children at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we:

- inform parents and carers about the school's RSE policy and practice;
- answer any questions that parents or carers may have about the RSE of their child;
- take seriously issues raised by parents or carers about this policy, or about the arrangements for RSE in the school;
- encourage parents and carers to be involved in reviewing the school policy, and making modifications to it as necessary (see section 4);
- inform parents and 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.

We believe that through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing bodies, their increasing responsibilities to look after themselves and how to form positive relationships with others.

7.2 Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the sex education programme that we teach in our school. If a parent wishes for their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should discuss this with the Head of School, and make it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The school always complies with the wishes of parents/carers in this regard. Parents and carers will receive notice via a letter prior to any sex education lessons being taught. The teaching of relationship education and scientific teaching regarding the human body (taught as part of our science curriculum) is statutory.

8 The role of other members of the community

8.1 We work closely with valued members of the wider community, for example the school nurse, to gain advice and support to the children with regard to RSE

9 Confidentiality

9.1 RSE lessons are taught in a sensitive manner, and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, adults will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a child protection matter. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they have been a victim of abuse (physical or online). The Designated Safeguarding Lead will be informed about their concerns immediately. The Head Teacher will then deal with the matter in consultation with health care professionals (Please see our Child Protection policy).

10 The role of the Head Teacher

10.1 It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher to ensure that both staff and parents/carers are informed about our RSE policy and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Head Teacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training so that they can teach about RSE effectively, and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

11. Monitoring and review

11.1 The safeguarding governor monitors the impact of our sex education policy on an annual basis. The governor reports their findings and recommendations to the full local governing body, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The LGB gives serious consideration to any comments from parents and carers about the sex education programme and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of our sex education programme.

11.2 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or earlier if necessary.