



Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

Although The Relationships Education, Relationship & Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 made Relationship Education compulsory in all primary schools and parents are unable to withdraw their child from this; sex education is currently not compulsory. However, the Department for Education continues to recommend that all primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and maturity of the pupils. This policy is set out to explain how and why RSE is taught at Rodings Primary School.

Some aspects of RSE are taught in science, and others are taught as part of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE). RSE gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

As set out in the guidance it is up to individual schools to determine whether they need to cover any additional content on sex education to meet the needs of their pupils. We, like many other schools, already choose to teach some aspects of sex education and will continue to do so.

We recognise that some parents may be uncomfortable with the thought of their children receiving sex education in primary school. Equally, we recognise it is completely natural for children to have questions about sex, their bodies and to be curious about where they came from. In the age of information where children in primary school have access to the internet through mobile technology, we believe it is better that children receive age appropriate answers from us rather than it being left to their peers or the internet.

In our school, sex education is an opportunity to answer children's questions about where they came from, an opportunity to explore their own stories and to be clear about how a baby is conceived and formed as set out in the human life cycle unit in the National Curriculum for science. Furthermore, it should ensure that all children are prepared for both the physical and emotional changes of puberty including menstruation. Children need to understand how both girls' and boys' bodies function and change as they grow into adults.

We recognise that the onset of menstruation can be a confusing or distressing time for children if they are not prepared. As a school we acknowledge we have a responsibility to prepare children for menstruation and make adequate and sensitive arrangements to help children manage their period. Puberty is occurring earlier than ever before, and it is now not uncommon for children to start their periods whilst in primary school even in year 4. For this reason we deliver puberty lessons to all children in year 4, 5 & 6. As part of RSE lessons, all children will be told about menstruation and there will be discussion of what periods are, explanation of other symptoms associated with periods, how they can be managed hygienically and sensitively. In addition to this, we discuss the emotional and physical changes people encounter during puberty. Including body odour, mood swings, hair growth, acne and growth spurts.

We believe that sex education should allow children a safe space to ask the questions they may have without shame or judgement. Evidence states that a

graduated age appropriate spiral curriculum is the best way of preventing the topic of sex, reproduction and private body parts from becoming taboo and children from becoming embarrassed by the topic.

We believe it is important that this material is delivered by the classroom teacher in conjunction with parents/carers as it highlights to the children that relationship and sex education is something we can all talk about. Our classroom teachers cover all other aspects of the curriculum, we believe it is important that all staff are able to deliver this material to their class also. Furthermore, our classroom teachers know our children. This means they are more likely to be aware of any additional needs, support or particularly sensitive topics that may make a child in their class vulnerable due to some of the sensitive nature of the topic. We believe this makes them ideally placed to deliver the material sensitively to all children in their class.

We do not separate our classes into girls and boys for any part of the programme, including lessons around puberty. We believe it is important for both girls and boys to learn about each other's bodies, changes and experiences. By keeping children together in mixed groups, children will learn to talk openly without embarrassment in front of each other and we can foster a better understanding, break down gender stereotypes and build positive relationships and respect for each other, regardless of gender. This means that all children are included without feeling vulnerable.

Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations

Term/Abbreviation	Meaning
DfE	Department for Education
PSHE	Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
RSE	Relationships and Sex Education