



# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2023

## **Introduction**

- 101 This policy covers our school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) from Year 5 to Year 8, and has been produced by the Life Studies Lead, in consultation with the Science Lead, the ICT Lead, the PE Lead, the North Tyneside Council Health and Wellbeing School Improvement Advisor, the Headteacher and the Governing Body. It will be reviewed in January 2026 or sooner if there are significant changes made to the subject. This policy meets statutory guidance to adopt Relationships & Sex Education which became compulsory in 2020.

## **Policy and Parents**

- 201 Parents will be informed about the RSE policy in a variety of ways. A physical copy of the policy will be made available to those parents wishing to view it. The policy will also be available for parents to view via the school's website.

## **Overall school aims and objectives**

- 301 Our school's overarching aims and objectives for our pupils are:
- To provide an exciting, challenging and motivating learning environment for all pupils, showing respect for the diversity of people's backgrounds.
  - To set high standards of attainment and achievement for all pupils, ensuring that similar life opportunities are available to all.
  - To prepare pupils for the evolving world we live in.

## **How do these inform and impact RSE teaching?**

- 401 The school aims to provide a programme of RSE as part of the Life Studies, ICT and the Science curriculum in school. Life Studies includes Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) along with Religious Education

RSE is lifelong learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships and sexual health. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. RSE has a key part to play in the personal, social, moral and spiritual development of young people. It begins informally in the home with parents and carers long before any formal education takes place at school. Young people's entitlement to RSE is enshrined in the terms of the Education Act (1996) and follows the advice set out in the Relationships and Sex Education Guidance, issued by the DFES in July 2019. This updates the guidance from 2000 and brings

learning up to date with the statutory Relationships Education (for KS2) and Relationships and Sex Education (for KS3) which was implemented in September 2020.

### **Rationale**

- 501 Quality RSE should equip the pupils with the information, skills and values to have safe, fulfilling and enjoyable relationships and to take responsibility for their own health and well-being. We believe it is important to address this area of the curriculum because in the 21st century it ensures that pupils are receiving a reliable source of information and an opportunity to explore the messages they are receiving in a safe learning environment.
- 502 Teachers of Life Studies, ICT and Science have shared responsibility for the teaching of RSE, and the use of outside speakers, where possible, will complement it. Staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust (in loco parentis).
- 503 Personal beliefs and attitudes of staff should not influence the teaching of RSE; all those contributing to the programme are expected to work within the framework provided.

### **High quality RSE:**

- 601 MBMS considers that high quality RSE:
- is a partnership between home and school
  - ensures children and young people's views are actively sought to influence lesson planning and teaching
  - starts early and is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity
  - is taught by people who are trained and confident in talking about issues such as healthy and unhealthy relationships, equality, respect, abuse, sexuality, gender identity, sex and consent
  - includes the acquisition of knowledge, the development of life skills and respectful attitudes and values
  - supports children and young people to develop critical thinking skills, including around gender equity, power dynamics in relationships and digital literacies
  - supports children and young people to develop positive relationships with themselves and others based on respect and equality.

- has sufficient time to cover a wide range of topics, with a strong emphasis on relationships, consent, rights, responsibilities to others, negotiation and communication skills, and accessing services
- helps pupils understand the issues of personal and internet safety, consent, violence, child sexual exploitation (CSE), forced and early marriage, and female genital mutilation (FGM)
- is both medically and factually correct and treats sex as a normal and enjoyable fact of life
- is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experience
- helps pupils understand a range of views and beliefs about relationships and sex in society including some of the mixed messages about gender, sex and sexuality from different sources including the media

**602 Quality RSE teaching contributes to:**

- a positive ethos and environment for learning
- safeguarding pupils, promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion
- a reduction in gender-based and homophobic prejudice
- bullying and violence and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships
- helping pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice
- reducing early sexual activity, teenage conceptions, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying

**603 Intended learning Outcomes**

The learning outcomes of the programme of work will be that pupils will:

- be able to explain the changes that occur during puberty physically, socially and emotionally
- understand the importance of stable, loving relationships
- promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society, such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media
- understand they have a right to accurate information and to be taught where to seek advice and support if required

- understand they have a responsibility to behave appropriately and within the law, considering how their behaviour will affect those around them
- be ready to live their lives well, and with respect for those around them, in the modern world

### **ICT and RSE**

701 Pupils will be taught across all year groups the importance of internet safety and the potential dangers that the internet and mobile phones can pose in this context. This will be delivered by the ICT department in conjunction with the Life Studies department. For further detail on internet safety and the safety procedures put in place by the school, e.g. filtering (see the ICT policy).

### **Answering student's questions**

801 MBMS believes that pupils should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a pupil may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with pupils and by taking an approach that encourages pupils to be mature and sensible. If a teacher does not know the answer to a question they will acknowledge this and suggest that they and pupils research the answer to the question later. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the pupil who asked.

A classroom box for written enquiries will be encouraged, to allow reticent or embarrassed pupils to raise concerns, and to allow teachers some consideration of whether and how to answer. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse they will immediately follow the school's child protection procedures.

**Homosexuality and homophobic/transphobic bullying are discussed openly.**

### **Causes of concern for pupils**

901 There are occasions when a lesson can trigger emotional discomfort for a pupil because of unknown situations in their own lives. Teachers will always endeavour to let the pupils know what the learning will be for the

following week. If an issue occurs, the teacher can then decide on the best course of action to meet that individual pupil's needs, ensuring that the curriculum is delivered despite any adjustments to the environment.

Approaches may include:

- reassurance and giving a measure of control to the pupil
- seating the pupil just outside the door
- removing the pupil to another room and teaching the content individually later

### **Confidentiality**

1001 School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. This should be done in the initial ground rules lesson which all PSHE teachers are required to do. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made. Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

### **Offering advice**

1002 Staff will provide a general education about sexual matters and issues. They will not offer individual advice, information or counselling on sexual matters and contraception. Staff should not give advice on sexual matters to a pupil if a parent has withdrawn that pupil from sex education lessons or give personal contraceptive advice to pupils under 16 for whom sexual intercourse is illegal. The teacher can, however, provide pupils with education and information about where and from whom they can receive confidential sexual advice e.g. the school nurse or their GP, but this is not to be encouraged as it is not part of the RSE programme.

### **Assessment**

1101 Teachers will assess pupils learning through talk and observation, as well as by considering written responses. The key objectives will be assessed and recorded on the school tracking system. Each pupil will evaluate how far he/she feels he/she has met the learning objectives.

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

1201 The Humanities faculty leader will monitor delivery of RSE through observation and discussion with teaching staff to ensure consistent and

coherent curriculum provision. Subject assessments will take place on a regular basis, which will include a mixture of the following:

- Self-evaluations
- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny

The Humanities faculty leader will also work regularly and consistently with the Headteacher and RSE link governor, e.g. through regular review meetings, to evaluate the effectiveness of the topics and implement any changes

### **Inclusion and Differentiation**

- 1301 The teachers will respect each pupil's unique starting points by making sure the scheme of work is differentiated. The teachers must make sure that teaching assistants are informed in advance of the topics so that work can be adapted to suit the needs of all groups of pupils. Teachers must take into account the differing genders, disabilities, cultures, ethnicity, religion, belief and life experiences of the children they are educating

### **Roles and Responsibilities - Involving Parents and Carers**

- 1401 The Humanities faculty leader is responsible for the writing of policy, schemes of work and selection of appropriate resources. A number of other Life Studies teachers may work under her direction on a year to year basis. The RSE policy will be available to read and staff will be available to answer any concerns a parent may have. Pupils will be encouraged to share their learning each week with parents and we regularly include pupil work on the school twitter account. We also use this medium to signpost to a variety of useful organisations.
- 1402 A questionnaire was sent out to all parents in December 2022 via google forms. 113 questionnaires were returned, the information was collated and fed into policy preparation. Parents, on the whole, were very supportive of our plans. A follow-up email was sent to parents on 2nd May 2023.

### **Supporting 'At Risk' Pupils**

- 1501 During the teaching of RSE pupils may give cause for concern and the member of staff is responsible for informing the class teacher and/or Head of Year, or if necessary directly seeking help from the Safeguarding Team. The teacher will also consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to

ascertain if there are issues that the teacher should be aware of before the unit of work is commenced

### **Procedures for Pupil Withdrawal from RSE**

- 1601 Parents may request to see the programme of study and will be encouraged to speak to the Life Studies Lead should they have any concerns about the content and delivery of RSE. A pupil cannot be withdrawn from Sex Education where this is taught in the Science National Curriculum. Pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education content in Life Studies lessons will still receive biological information but not be taught this in the context of relationships. In the instance that the right to withdrawal is exercised, parents/carers should be made aware that issues around Sex Education could arise naturally from class discussion or from discussion in the playground. At MBMS, we believe that being taught such information in a relevant, straightforward way is immeasurably better than receiving potential half truths from playground conversations. **Currently, there is only one lesson, in Year 6, which would be considered “sex education” and meet the criteria for withdrawal.** If parents wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from this lesson, they should put the request in writing to Mrs L Jackson, Life Studies Lead

### **Taught content**

- 1701 Please see Appendix 1 for the programmes of study. These are taken directly from the 2020 guidance.



## **Appendix 1 - programmes of study**

Taught content is approached jointly through Life Studies, PE, ICT, Science and assemblies.

By the end of Year 6 students will have covered the following:

### **Families and close positive relationships**

R1. to recognise that there are different types of relationships (e.g. friendships, family relationships, romantic relationships, online relationships)

R2. that people may be attracted to someone emotionally and romantically; that people may be attracted to someone of the same sex or different sex to them

R3. about marriage and civil partnership as a legal declaration of commitment made by two adults who love and care for each other, which is intended to be lifelong

R4. that forcing anyone to marry against their will is a crime; that help and support is available to people who are worried about this for themselves or others

R5. that people who love and care for each other can be in a committed relationship (e.g. marriage), living together, but may also live apart

R6. that a feature of positive family life is caring relationships; about the different ways in which people care for one another

R7. to recognise and respect that there are different types of family structure (including single parents, same-sex parents, step-parents, blended families, foster parents); that families of all types can give family members love, security and stability

R8. to recognise other shared characteristics of healthy family life, including commitment, care, spending time together; being there for each other in times of difficulty

R9. how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice

### **Friendships**

R10. about the importance of friendships; strategies for building positive friendships; how positive friendships support wellbeing

R11. what constitutes a positive healthy friendship (e.g. mutual respect, trust, truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences, support with problems and difficulties); that the same principles apply to online friendships as to face-to-face relationships

R12. to recognise what it means to 'know someone online' and how this differs from knowing someone face-to-face; risks of communicating online with others not known face-to-face

R13. the importance of seeking support if feeling lonely or excluded

R14. that healthy friendships make people feel included; recognise when others may feel lonely or excluded; strategies for how to include them

R15. strategies for recognising and managing peer influence and a desire for peer approval in friendships; to recognise the effect of online actions on others

R16. how friendships can change over time, about making new friends and the benefits of having different types of friends

R17. that friendships have ups and downs; strategies to resolve disputes and reconcile differences positively and safely

R18. to recognise if a friendship (online or offline) is making them feel unsafe or uncomfortable; how to manage this and ask for support if necessary

### **Managing hurtful behaviour and bullying**

R19. about the impact of bullying, including offline and online, and the consequences of hurtful behaviour

R20. strategies to respond to hurtful behaviour experienced or witnessed, offline and online (including teasing, name-calling, bullying, trolling, harassment or the deliberate excluding of others); how to report concerns and get support

R21. about discrimination: what it means and how to challenge it

### **Safe relationships**

R22. about privacy and personal boundaries; what is appropriate in friendships and wider relationships (including online);

R23. about why someone may behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not; strategies for recognising risks, harmful content and contact; how to report concerns

R24. how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts including online) whom they do not know

R25. recognise different types of physical contact; what is acceptable and unacceptable; strategies to respond to unwanted physical contact

R26. about seeking and giving permission (consent) in different situations

R27. about keeping something confidential or secret, when this should (e.g. a birthday surprise that others will find out about) or should not be agreed to, and when it is right to break a confidence or share a secret

R28. how to recognise pressure from others to do something unsafe or that makes them feel uncomfortable and strategies for managing this

R29. where to get advice and report concerns if worried about their own or someone else's personal safety (including online)

### **Respecting self and others**

R30. that personal behaviour can affect other people; to recognise and model respectful behaviour online

R31. to recognise the importance of self-respect and how this can affect their thoughts and feelings about themselves; that everyone, including them, should expect to be treated politely and with respect by others (including when online and/or anonymous) in school and in wider society; strategies to improve or support courteous, respectful relationships

R32. about respecting the differences and similarities between people and recognising what they have in common with others e.g. physically, in personality or background

R33. to listen and respond respectfully to a wide range of people, including those whose traditions, beliefs and lifestyle are different to their own

R34. how to discuss and debate topical issues, respect other people's point of view and constructively challenge those they disagree with

By the end of Year 8 students we will continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary and in addition cover the following content:

### **Positive relationships**

- R1. about different types of relationships, including those within families, friendships, romantic or intimate relationships and the factors that can affect them
- R2. indicators of positive, healthy relationships and unhealthy relationships, including online
- R3. about the similarities, differences and diversity among people of different race, culture, ability, sex, gender identity, age and sexual orientation
- R4. the difference between biological sex, gender identity and sexual orientation
- R5. to recognise that sexual attraction and sexuality are diverse
- R6. that marriage is a legal, social and emotional commitment that should be entered into freely, and never forced upon someone through threat or coercion
- R7. how the media portrays relationships and the potential impact of this on people's expectations of relationships
- R8. that the portrayal of sex in the media and social media (including pornography) can affect people's expectations of relationships and sex

### **Relationship values**

- R9. to clarify and develop personal values in relationships
- R10. the importance of trust in relationships and the behaviours that can undermine or build trust
- R11. to evaluate expectations about gender roles, behaviour and intimacy within romantic relationships

### **Forming and maintaining respectful relationships**

- R13. how to safely and responsibly form, maintain and manage positive relationships, including online
- R14. the qualities and behaviours they should expect and exhibit in a wide variety of positive relationships (including in school and wider society, family and friendships, including online)
- R15. to further develop and rehearse the skills of team working
- R16. to further develop the skills of active listening, clear communication, negotiation and compromise
- R17. strategies to identify and reduce risk from people online that they do not already know; when and how to access help
- R18. to manage the strong feelings that relationships can cause
- R19. to develop conflict management skills and strategies to reconcile after disagreements
- R20. to manage the influence of drugs and alcohol on decision-making within relationships and social situations
- R21. how to manage the breakdown of a relationship (including its digital legacy), loss and change in relationships

R22. the effects of change, including loss, separation, divorce and bereavement; strategies for managing these and accessing support

R23. the services available to support healthy relationships and manage unhealthy relationships, and how to access them

### **Consent**

R24. that consent is freely given; that being pressurised, manipulated or coerced to agree to something is not giving consent, and how to seek help in such circumstances

R25. about the law relating to sexual consent

R26. how to seek, give, not give and withdraw consent (in all contexts, including online)

R27. that the seeker of consent is legally and morally responsible for ensuring that consent has been given; that if consent is not given or is withdrawn, that decision should always be respected

R28. to gauge readiness for sexual intimacy

R29. the impact of sharing sexual images of others without consent

R30. how to manage any request or pressure to share an image of themselves or others, and how to get help

R31. that intimate relationships should be pleasurable

### **Bullying, abuse and discrimination**

R37. the characteristics of abusive behaviours, such as grooming, sexual harassment, sexual and emotional abuse, violence and exploitation; to recognise warning signs, including online; how to report abusive behaviours or access support for themselves or others

R38. to recognise bullying, and its impact, in all its forms; the skills and strategies to manage being targeted or witnessing others being bullied

R39. the impact of stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination on individuals and relationships

R40. about the unacceptability of prejudice-based language and behaviour, offline and online, including sexism, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, racism, ableism and faith-based prejudice

R41. the need to promote inclusion and challenge discrimination, and how to do so safely, including online

### **Social influences**

R42. to recognise peer influence and to develop strategies for managing it, including online

R43. the role peers can play in supporting one another to resist pressure and influence, challenge harmful social norms and access appropriate support

R44. that the need for peer approval can generate feelings of pressure and lead to increased risk-taking; strategies to manage this

R45. about the factors that contribute to young people joining gangs; the social, legal and physical consequences of gang behaviours

R46. strategies to manage pressure to join a gang, exit strategies and how to access appropriate support

R47. motivations, misconceptions and consequences of carrying weapons and strategies for managing pressure to carry a weapon

NB Pupils will be taught the Key Stage 3 Science curriculum in relation to sex and the human life cycle, including menstruation, fertilisation, the development of the foetus and childbirth. The changes in humans as they go through puberty are also covered, relating to hormones and physical changes alongside psychological effects.