



Phoenix Arch School

Sex and Relationships Education Policy (RSE)

Phoenix Arch School takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationships and sex education (RSE) to all its pupils as part of the school's personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) curriculum very seriously. The school wants parents and pupils to feel assured that RSE will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of pupils, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

This policy is drafted by PSHE coordinator in consultation with the head teacher. Parents are given the opportunity to read this policy and express their opinion, and teaching and non-teaching staff are invited to discuss it during training sessions. The policy is reviewed and approved by the governing body annually.

1. Definition

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, personal hygiene, 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.

2. Aims

The aims of sex and relationship 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, including recognizing healthy boundaries.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

The school would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE we are encouraging pupils to develop healthy relationships. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We want to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

3. Statutory requirements

We must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. However, we are not required to provide sex education but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the

science curriculum. In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. At Phoenix Arch we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

4. Roles and responsibilities

School staff

All school staff are confident in teaching PSHE classes and answering questions from pupils. The school provides regular professional development training for staff on how to deliver RSE education; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSE is so important. There are members of the school leadership team who will hold more responsibility for ensuring that the school's sex education provision is relevant to our pupils and effective, but this is generally a responsibility for all staff members and the school expects staff to voice opinions and share expertise in this area.

Governors and senior leaders will:

- Develop this school policy and review it on a yearly basis. This policy is developed in consultation with school parents, pupils and staff to ensure that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
- Ensure that all staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues relating to RSE and how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to sex education.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to pupils. This may be that aspects of the curriculum conflict with their religious beliefs.
- Ensure that sex education is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding RSE to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Support parental involvement in the development of the RSE curriculum.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced RSE in school.
- Communicate freely with staff, parents and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as appropriate. We want the provision of sex education at home to be complementary to the provision the school provides, and this should be clearly communicated to parents and additional support given where necessary or requested.

All staff will:

- Attend and engage in professional development training around sex education provision when appropriate.
- Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they should take this concern to the school safeguarding leader.

- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced SRE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs

Pupils

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

Pupils will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have related to relationship and sex education. Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils may be held privately ; following our safeguarding procedures. Staff will take concerns to the safeguarding lead if there is a child protection concern to deal with the issue at hand.

Parents

The school expects parents to share the responsibility of SRE and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed. For information on accessing school support, see section 5.

5. Curriculum

We have developed a broad curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils.

Primary sex education will focus on:

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

By the end of primary school pupils should know:

Families and people who care about 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 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

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, 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

- 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

- 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

- 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 e.g. family, school and/or other sources

In **Key Stage 1**, the focus will be on children being able to understand the importance of:

- Self- esteem.
- The concept of growth and change.
- Showing respect.
- Relationships – family, friends; understanding others and respecting difference
- Feelings.
- Knowing the correct names for the external parts of the body, including sexual parts.
- Personal hygiene.
- Knowing places that are safe and where to go for help.
- Making safe choices – saying no, when to keep a secret, when to tell.
- Knowing that we have rights over our own bodies.

In **Key Stage 2**

- Life changes.
- Self -esteem.
- Respect for their own and others bodies.
- Recognising risk/making safe choices – who has access to their bodies?
- Resisting unwanted peer pressure.
- Influence of the media.
- How to access help.
- Feelings and emotional change (linked to puberty).
- Bullying.
- Relationships (family, friends, love, marriage).
- Understanding differences.
- Preparation for sexual maturity and the process of conception and birth.
- How changes at puberty affect body hygiene.

Pupils learn to express their opinions about relationships and bullying and to listen to and support others, including respecting other people’s viewpoints and beliefs. They learn to recognise their own worth and identify positive things about themselves and try to balance the stresses in life in order to promote their own mental health and well-being of others.

Life processes are discussed including the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them.

Other agencies/visiting speaker’s e.g. new mothers and their babies may be invited to input into the programme.

Foundation Stage

- The children will learn how they have changed physically since they were very small and that they will continue to grow and change all their lives.
- Children will examine what they currently do to look after themselves, including dressing and undressing. They will learn to recognise their personal needs and the adults who are responsible for looking after them. They will develop responsible and caring attitudes towards living things and the environment at home and at school.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum. This will ensure that it covers the statutory biological aspects, but also the social and emotional aspects. It is taught throughout the years, either as discrete topics/units or integrated into other topics such as **Ourselves, Growing and Living Things**, at a level appropriate to the needs and maturity of the pupils.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe.

Equal opportunities

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and moral cultural beliefs. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the **school's behaviour policy**.

The areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure 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, 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).

Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- an anonymous question box; this will enable pupils to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified
- making the classroom an environment that is safe to discuss issues, concerns or fears related to RSE;

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to RSE.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

7. Withdrawal from SRE

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents to read this policy. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. It is, however, a statutory right of parents or carers to withdraw the children in their care from RSE. This excludes withdrawal from the relationship education and elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum Science.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from RSE should contact the head teacher who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

8. Safeguarding and confidentiality

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's **child protection and safeguarding procedure** should be followed.

Personal information about pupils who have approached a teacher for discussion should not be shared with any other person. If there is a child protection concern, the information must **only be shared with the DSL** as is outlined in the school child protection and safeguarding procedure. Staff members that breach the right to a child's privacy by disclosing or sharing confidential information with no reason to do so will be dealt with under the school's **staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures**.

9. Monitoring, review and evaluation

Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we review the RSE curriculum yearly, and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy on RSE education curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our RSE education provision through: termly/yearly feedback from pupils

- feedback from parents
- feedback from staff
- classroom observations
- feedback from pupils

The school will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

10. Support

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

Signed by

_____ **Chair of governors** **Date:**

_____ **Headteacher** **Date:**

This policy will be reviewed annually