



Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy

September 2021



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Rationale & Ethos

This policy covers Nook Lane's approach to relationship and sex education (RSE). These subjects meet statutory obligations as outlined in revised Department for Education statutory guidance (2019). This guidance states that from September 2020, all schools must deliver relationships education (in primary schools) and relationships and sex education (in secondary schools).

In Year 5 at Nook Lane, puberty is taught as part of the science curriculum, linked to the life cycle of humans.

In Year 6, sex education is taught. Parents have the right to remove their child from these lessons. School consults with parents in Year 5 and Year 6 about this.

We include the Equality Act (Equality Act 2010: advice for schools) and Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory Safeguarding Guidance (2016).

We define relationships and sex education as the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships, including with family, friends and online, and, at the appropriate time, to sexual health and developing intimate relationships. In the teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health, RSE is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or activity.

We promote the importance of treating ourselves and others with kindness, consideration and respect. The curriculum provides lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development.

We believe relationships and sex education plays a key part in providing children and young people with the knowledge that enables them to make informed decisions about their well-being, health and relationships and build their self-efficacy. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support. Ultimately, helping our young people to be happy, healthy and safe now and in the future.

Teaching & Learning

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our PSHE provision, see our Personal, Social & Health Education Policy). Biological aspects of RSE are also taught within the science curriculum. RSE will be taught across the curriculum in regular sessions. Although specific topics will be addressed, other areas may arise incidentally and will be treated with sensitivity. Staff will use a variety of teaching strategies and approaches in keeping with the maturity of the pupils. The class teacher will deliver the RSE curriculum. Through RSE we will cover:

Lower Key Stage 2

Family

- Understand that families can change
- Appreciate that there are cultural differences between families
- Know that boys and girls should be treated equally

Friends

- Choosing healthy friendships
- Understanding that friends are diverse
- How to resolve conflict

Community

- Consider their place within a happy and fair world
- Explore feelings of belonging
- Learn how to contribute to society
- Learn about the way our country is governed

Mental Wellbeing

- Manage feelings
- Understand the causes and barriers to our own happiness
- Identify positive and negative habits

Physical health

- Appreciate the importance of exercise
- Appreciate the importance of a healthy diet
- Understand issues relating to hygiene and illness

Upper Key Stage 2

Family

- Discuss the reason why people get married
- Learn how to disagree and listen to opposing views with respect
- Understand that families are highly varied and that the differences between people should be accepted and celebrated.

Friends

- Appreciate ongoing complexity of close friendships
- Celebrate difference
- Identify manipulation tactics
- Learn to stand up for our own interests
- Identify and challenge bullying and stereotypes
- Accept and celebrate difference
- Begin to understand gender identity and sexual orientation

Community

- Understand the history of prejudice and discrimination
- Learn how to stand up to prejudice
- Learn about impairments and the way to treat disabled people with respect
- Understand the importance of money and how to use it wisely
- Explore the inequalities created by unequal distribution of wealth
- Explore what it means to be British

Mental Wellbeing

- Develop empathy for other people in the world
- Understand mental wellbeing

Resolve conflicts

- Understand the causes of our emotions
- Explore self-identity

Physical health

- Critique beauty standards and expectations and the effect these have on mental health
- Understand that we need to balance long term happiness with short term enjoyment
- Have a thorough understanding of diet and exercise
- Appreciate the significance to health of hygiene and illness
- Learn about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Learn how to verify health information
- Identify and manage hazards and risk
- Learn key life -saving skills

Growing up

Puberty

- Understand physical changes including identifying body parts
- Understand emotional changes
- Understand the importance of hygiene during puberty
- Understand the process of menstruation

Optional

- Learn how sexual reproduction can lead to childbirth

Language and terminology has a vital role to play in helping children develop a vocabulary they can use to communicate comfortably, respectfully and accurately about the human body, growing up, sex and relationships. A vocabulary list for each lesson or unit has been developed and will be shared with parents in advance of teaching.

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the teacher and the RSE lead teacher. Teacher evaluation of the lessons, units and overall programme will be shared with the school's RSE lead teacher, the senior leadership team and governors. Children will give feedback via School Council and the RSE Curriculum Council.

Inclusivity

All pupils, whatever their experience, background and identity, are entitled to a quality RSE curriculum, that helps them build confidence, a positive sense of self, and the knowledge and understanding to stay healthy and safe.

Our school's RSE programme is underpinned by a good understanding of pupils' backgrounds, and positive relationships between the school, parents and the local community form the foundations for the teaching of these subjects.

All classes include pupils with different abilities and aptitudes, experiences, home structures, religious/cultural backgrounds, gender and sexual identities. To encourage pupils to participate in lessons, teachers will ensure content, approach and use of inclusive language reflects the diversity of the school community and helps each and every pupil to feel valued and included in the classroom. We will ensure RSE is matched to the needs of your pupils by liaising with parents of children with special educational needs to ensure the content of the lesson will be understood, resources are easily accessed and any cognitive, speech and language, sensory and physical difficulties are considered. Emotional maturity will also be considered when delivering each unit of work.

We must ensure that we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, when delivering these subjects to ensure equal opportunities for all. This includes, but is not limited to, awareness and consideration for:

- Faith perspectives in the context of balanced debate
- Cultural diversity
- Disability
- Varied family structures and home backgrounds
- Gender identity, sexual identity and sexual orientation

Teaching will reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010), as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

At Nook Lane we commit to respecting the views and wishes of our diverse communities in a way which does no harm to the other. All learning centres on compassion; teaching our children respect and acceptance of difference, without infringing on the human rights of communities to their religious beliefs or to living their lives freely and openly as LGBT+ people.

At Nook Lane our approach to LGBT+ teaching – there are no specific LGBT lessons, the content is spread throughout the curriculum. For example, it might come up during discussions about families, discrimination, gender identity, puberty, communities or mental health. In Key Stage 1, lessons cover the variety of families in our community, which includes many different people, including same-sex parents. At this point the focus is not linked to being gay, but the fact that having two mums or two dads is normal and healthy and that it is the way that we treat each other that matters. In Key Stage 2, we talk more about what sexuality is, what the correct terminology is and about the discrimination that some people face because of their sexual orientation.

At Nook Lane our approach to teaching about faith perspective is supported using the Discovery RE curriculum. We learn about a variety of religions and their value systems as advised in the National Curriculum. This includes understanding that there is a diversity of opinion within belief systems, as well as between them. Religion often informs someone's culture and values and is likely to influence their relationships with other people. Although we do not teach religious viewpoints about particular subjects in RSE, children are likely to discuss the way that their own religion affects the way they think about specific topics – for example, when talking about 'where do I feel like I belong', a child might mention their weekly attendance at church.

Safe learning environment and safeguarding

We acknowledge that sensitive and potentially difficult issues will arise in RSE as pupils will naturally share information and ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it is guided in a way that reflects the school aims and curriculum content for RSE. To support a safe learning environment:

- Teachers will set the tone by speaking in a matter -of -fact way and be clear what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting.
- Teachers and pupils will agree ground rules by discussion. These will be explained and be visible in the classroom. Teachers will refer back to these rules during discussions as appropriate.
- Distancing techniques will be used to help depersonalise the situations under discussion. Being in a role, empathising with a character or speaking in response to the actions of others (real or imaginary) allows pupils to explore their feelings about issues safely, because they are not speaking or acting as themselves. Distancing also helps pupils learn and then reflect on how it applies to their own lives.

- Pupils will be told when they can raise questions verbally. Pupils will also be able to raise questions in writing, this can be anonymous if they wish, by using a question box that is always available in the classroom. This will enable pupils to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified. Pupils will be reminded of the question box during RSE sessions.
- Teachers will answer pupil questions relating to the taught, planned curriculum for the age group of the class.
- Staff will have time to prepare answers to all questions before the next session, and will choose not to respond in a whole class setting to any questions that are inappropriate or need one to one follow up.
- Teachers will answer questions relating to areas beyond the taught, planned curriculum for that age group, in a sensitive and age appropriate way, only to the pupil or pupils who have asked the question. If a verbal question is too personal, staff will remind the pupils of the ground rules.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for the pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns, staff will acknowledge it and promise to attend to it later on an individual basis.
- Staff will not provide more information than is appropriate to the age of the pupil. If a member of staff is uncertain about the answer to a question, or indeed whether they should answer it, they will seek guidance from the PSHE/RSE leader or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Questions may be referred to parents/carers if it is not appropriate to answer them in school.
- Staff training will include session on how to deal with difficult questions. Agreed phrases, where appropriate, will be used in response to difficult questions, these can include; 'That is something that may be covered later on, maybe at a higher year in school', 'I can't answer that question, but you could ask your parents/carers'. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable about. In such situations, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the Designated Safeguarding Lead or another member of staff.
- Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibilities of abuse or risk of harm, teachers must follow the school policy and procedures for safeguarding and child protection.
- All staff teaching RSE will be supported by the designated person for Safeguarding and Child Protection if they have any concerns, and the PSHE/RSE lead,

Assessment and review of learning

Assessment plays a key role in effective RSE teaching and learning. Assessment is a process through which judgements are made about an individual's learning and development. It is not about making judgements on the character, worth or values of individual pupils, nor is it about continual testing. Teachers will keep a note of pupils who have missed significant parts of RSE teaching and learning due to absence. Pupils' development in RSE focuses on knowledge as well as skill development and attitudes. It is monitored by class teachers through the use of observation, feedback from pupils and written outcomes in lessons.

Pupils' learning in these subjects will not be formally assessed through the provision of grades and levels or through exams or tests.

Pupils will be encouraged to reflect and self-assess their own learning and progress by taking part in reflection sessions at the end of lessons and units of work.

The following are examples of questions that may be used with pupils to support the reflections stage and to develop pupil understanding of what they have learned and the progress they have made:

- What do I know already?
- What new information have I learnt?
- What do I now think and believe?
- How did I feel about what I have found out?
- Did I learn anything that I did not expect to?
- How will it change my behaviour in the future?
- What do I now need to learn?

We report to parents/carers at the end of the school year on pupils' learning and progress as part of PSHE.

Roles and responsibilities

Named member of staff/co-ordinator for RSE/PSHE- **Diane Wilkinson**

Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy – **Diane Wilkinson & Steve Arbon-Davis**

Named Governor responsible for RSE – **Diane Shaw**

Governing Board

Overseeing the provision around RSE is the responsibility of the governing board, who will provide appropriate challenge and agree on the content of this policy. The governing board should liaise with senior leaders to access appropriate training to fulfil their role.

Senior Leaders/Lead members of staff

The lead members of staff will:

- Develop this school policy and ensure it is reviewed as per the agreed timetable
- Ensure appropriate training is offered to members of the governing body.
- 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 the curriculum and its delivery, this policy and any other Guidance relating to RSE.

Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of RSE to pupils.

Ensure that RSE is age appropriate and needs-led across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as the 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 parents/carer involvement in the development of the RSE curriculum. Ensure that their personal beliefs, values and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school. Communicate freely with staff, parents/carers and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for RSE, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to and acted on as is appropriate.

Ensure that provision of RSE at home is complementary to the provision the school provides and communicates to parents/carers any additional support available where necessary or requested.

The Headteacher is responsible for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (See section 5).

All staff

Teaching and support staff will:

- Ensure that they are up to date with this RSE policy and curriculum requirements regarding relationships and sex education.
- Report back to senior leaders/lead members of staff on any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for in the school's RSE provision.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around relationships and sex education provision, when appropriate.
- Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence and listen to their needs and support them seriously.
- Follow the school's reporting systems if a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that they feel they are not able to deal with alone.
- Be aware of safeguarding procedures, clear about managing confidentiality and handling disclosures.
- Deliver RSE in a sensitive way, ensuring that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced RSE curriculum in school.
- Model positive attitudes to RSE.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class across the whole range of abilities, faiths, beliefs and cultures, including those pupils with special educational needs, asking for support in this should they need it.
- Monitor pupil progress in RSE.
- Respond appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Pupils will be given the opportunity to share their views on RSE, the findings from consulting pupils will be used as a tool for communicating the needs of the children to parents/carers, school staff and governors.

Health professionals and external agencies

External visitors can have a valuable role in enhancing the teaching and learning of RSE. At Nook Lane, when selecting any external visitors, we will:

- Be clear about our reason for working with the visitor.
- Ensure visitor selection and presence in school meets requirements of our safeguarding policy.
- Ensure any visitor is made aware of our policies.
- Ensure any visitor is adequately trained and competent and that external input is factually correct, and where relevant, there is differentiation between fact and opinion.
- Be clear that responsibility for teaching and learning remains with the school.

We access external support from the autism team, learning support, the speech and language team, educational psychology, the school nurse and MAST (Multi Agency Support Team).

Training

It is important that all school staff feel comfortable and confident in planning and delivering RSE. We will make available regular professional development training in how to deliver relationships and sex education. Identification and provision for the continuing professional development (CPD) needs of staff, including non-teaching staff, are described in our Staff training/CPD Policy. For RSE specifically;

- Staff will be offered generic RSE guidance; this includes guidance on handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions, an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSE is so important, current law and guidance, learning outcomes and school policy.
- Staff involved in the delivery of RSE issues seen as potentially more sensitive, will be offered appropriate training to encourage confidence in dealing with matters of confidentiality, child protection, sensitive issues, and with potentially difficult questions.
- Staff can access useful links and resources through the Healthy Minds Programme.

Working with parents/carers

Nook Lane recognises the primary role parents and carers have in the RSE of their children. We wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with the parents/carers of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

To support this, parents/carers should:

- Be aware that schools are legally required to provide a broad, balanced curriculum and can access the school's policies online or request to view hard copies at the school. Be able to ask staff questions that they may have about the RSE education of their child.
- Receive information about RSE so they can support their child's learning at home.

We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities.

At Nook Lane, our aim is that, every parent/carer will have full confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs. As outlined in section 2 (Teaching and Learning), selected resources, such as books and film clips, will be used which support and promote understanding. Parents/carers will be given the opportunity to view these materials and resources. This may be by invite to a parent coffee morning, a consultation session or shared on the school's website.

Parents/carers will be informed by their child's class teacher when more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered in order that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their child's learning.

Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE (other than sex education in the National Curriculum as part of science), but **not** from relationships or health education.

If a parent wishes to have their child withdrawn from sex education, they are required to put the request in writing, addressed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will meet face to face with parents/carers to discuss the request, and as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are heard and understood. The purpose of the meeting is to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and understand the reasons for the request for withdrawal.

A record of the meeting will be taken including the final agreed decision, which will be shared with the child's class teacher. Class teachers will ensure appropriate alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSE.

The Department for Education are clear that special education needs should not generally be a consideration for withdrawal. As outlined in section 2.2, learning will be tailored to be inclusive of needs of all pupils.

Policy development, monitoring and review

This policy has been developed by all members of the school community including governors, staff, parents and pupils.

The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – The RSE Lead has collated all relevant information and resources, including local and national guidance and existing school policies.
- Consultation with parents – a lower key stage and upper key stage face to face consultation and information sharing session.
- Staff training and development – sharing the new curriculum, lesson plans and resources with all staff.
- RSE curriculum shared with the whole school community.
- RSE questionnaire shared with families to develop an understanding of further support and information needed to support their understanding of the new curriculum.
- Ratification – the policy was approved by the full governing body.

Nook Lane are committed to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of this policy. Specifically, important to the RSE curriculum are:

- Pupil feedback
- Staff review and feedback
- Parental feedback
- Further guidance and legislative changes

Policy availability

This policy will form part of the induction of all staff members and annual staff training. This policy is shared on our website.

Parents/carers and all staff members will be notified of any updates. They will be invited to comment on the policy.

Links to other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with other school policies, including RE, Inclusion, Special Educational Needs, Positive Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and Emotional Health & Wellbeing.

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

The next review will be September 2023.