



# **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education & Health Education Policy (RSHE)**

## **Bowes Cotherstone Federation**

**April 2022**

**Updated in line with current DfE RSHE statutory guidance**



Date policy approved/adopted	
Next review date	
Approved by:	
Head teacher	
Governor	



# Primary Relationships, Sex Education & Health Education Policy Guidance

## 1. This policy was developed in response to:

- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance, (Department for Education September 2020)
- Research commentary: teaching about sex, sexual orientation, and gender reassignment, (Chris Jones, Ofsted's Director, July 2021)
- Equality Act, 2010 and schools
- Not Yet Good Enough: personal, social, health and economic education in schools, (Ofsted 2013)
- Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0-25 years, 2020
- Life Lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools: Fifth Report, (House of Commons Education Committee 2015)
- Keeping Children safe in Education – Statutory Guidance, 2021
- Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision Green Paper (July 2018)

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- E-safety/Online Policy
- Anti-bullying/Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding Policy (including child sexual exploitation)
- Equality and Inclusion Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Promoting Mental Health and Resilience Policy
- Drugs Policy
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## 2. The engagement and consultation process has involved:

- Pupil focus groups / school council
- Consultation and engagement with parents / carers – Remote or in person
- Review of RSHE curriculum content with staff, pupils and parents /carers
- Consultation with wider school community e.g. Family Health Nurses, Education Durham
- Consultation, agreement and implementation of policy by school governors

**This policy template has been developed regard to the DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance 2019.**

## 3. Define your RSHE Programme

**Relationships Education** is the building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, including online. It gives children and young

people the essential skills to build positive, enjoyable, and non-exploitative relationships.

**Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral, and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships both on and offline, respect, love, and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills, and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

### **Health Education – Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing**

The focus in primary should be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Puberty including menstrual well-being should be covered in Health Education and addressed before the onset of puberty. This should ensure all pupils (regardless of gender and identity) are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.

RSHE helps our children to understand that there are different types of relationships and how to maintain them. There should be a clear progression of what is **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) at primary school** through to RSHE in secondary school and we value this in our school to ensure continuity through a spiral curriculum.

### **Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**

In special schools and for some SEND pupils in mainstream schools there may be a need to tailor content and teaching of RSHE to meet the specific needs of pupils at different development stages. Schools should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

## **4. Principles and Values –**

In addition, Bowes Cotherstone Federation believes that RSHE should:

- be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and to continue into adult life.
- be an entitlement for all pupils in our care.
- encourage every pupil to contribute to the school community that aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- be set within this wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge, and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. children living with blended families; those living with same sex parents, children looked after, adopted children, extended family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of diversity.
- encourage pupils and staff to share and listen to each other's views and the right to hold/express views. We are aware of different values and opinions to sexual orientation and gender identity without promotion of any family

structure. The important values are love, respect, kindness, generosity and care for each other.

- generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on personal matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- recognise that parents and carers are the prime educators in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils, consulting them about the content of programmes.
- recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with other health and education professionals.

## **Church of England Values – Bowes Hutchinson’s CE VA Primary School**

As a faith school, at Bowes Hutchinson’s CE VA Primary School, RSE is also about the spiritual and moral aspects of healthy, loving and nurturing relationships within a context of a Christian vision for the purpose of life. RSE will promote healthy resilient relationships set in the context of character and virtue development that sits within the schools Christian Vision and Values, such as such as honesty, integrity, self-control, courage, humility, kindness, forgiveness, generosity and a sense of justice.

### **RSHE has three main elements:**

#### **Attitudes and Values**

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices.
- Learning the value and valuing family life, stable and loving relationships, marriage and civil partnerships.
- learning about the nurture of children.
- Learning the value of and demonstrating respect, kindness, love and care.
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- developing skills including negotiation and decision making.
- The importance of permission seeking/consent and giving, in relationships including online with friends, peers and adults.
- challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

#### **Personal and Social Skills**

- learning to manage emotions within relationships confidently and sensitively, including off and online.
- developing positive self-esteem and confidence.
- developing and demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others.
- making informed choices with an absence of prejudice and discrimination
- pupils show respect for those who share the protected characteristics
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made.
- managing conflict resolution.
- empower pupils with the skills to be able to recognise inappropriate/uncomfortable situations and/or behaviours with their family, peers and adults, interacting online.
- How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.

## Knowledge and Understanding

- Should know that their bodies belong to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact
- Know the key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, which is relevant for all pupils, particularly from the ages 9 through to age 11.
- All pupils will learn about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle. (Health Education)
- learning about human reproduction, sexuality, gender identity, personal health, emotions, and relationships.
- learning about where to go for help or advice in school and how to access a range of local and national support agencies.

## 5. Aims and Objectives

The aim of RSHE is to provide balanced information about physical and emotional changes, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSHE programme aims to prepare pupils for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour.
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within personal relationships.
- avoid being pressured into uncomfortable or dangerous situations, including online sharing.
- Understand seeking permission, refusal and consent
- communicate and behave in a respectful manner towards people around them which contributes to a safe, inclusive environment/community
- develop awareness and understanding of their evolving sexuality and gender identity
- Challenge discrimination, sexism and prejudice, which is inclusive to all children and young people.
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves in a variety of situations including from exploitation.
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access advice and support if necessary.

At Bowes Cotherstone Federation, personal, social, health, economic and citizenship education (PSHCE) is an embedded part of our broad and balanced curriculum including our statutory RSE content. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is at the heart of our school and we want our children to be caring, confident, curious and happy proactive learners. In an every-changing world, it is important that they are aware, to an appropriate level, of different factors which will affect their world and that they learn how to deal with these and build resilience so that they have good mental health and well-being. British Values are promoted

through the overarching aims and objectives of PSHCE by supporting our children to become healthy and responsible members of society, as well as preparing them for life and work in modern Britain.

PSHCE enables our children to become healthy, independent and responsible members of a society. Our children will be taught to value each other, have equality and opportunity for all and respect of diversity and inclusivity. We aim to help children understand how they are developing personally and socially, and tackle many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up. We provide our children with opportunities for them to learn about rights and responsibilities and appreciate what it means to be a member of a diverse society. Our children are encouraged to develop their sense of self-worth by playing a positive role in contributing to school life and the wider community.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

Richard Batchelor: Executive Head of Federation and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Jennie Lee: Cotherstone RSHE Subject Lead

Tabitha Gillard: Bowes Hutchinson's CE VA RSHE Subject Lead

Isobel Thomas: DHT – Cotherstone, Computing Lead – Cotherstone

Jane MacInnes: Computing Lead – Bowes Hutchinson's CE VA

Alison Butler is the governor with responsibility for RSHE

## **7. Organisation and Content of RSHE**

### **Implementation**

The statutory RSE content is delivered through the PSHCE programme of study and our curriculum long term plan.

Our school Planning Framework is bespoke to school using resources connected to the statutory RSE & Health and broader PSHCE content. Medium term planning provides year group themed focus half termly/termly, skills and knowledge that is built over time progressively across the academic year and to all year groups. A minimum of 30-60mins per week, timetabled lessons include a mixture of taught focussed work including written work and discussion.

Our planning uses a thematic approach (based around the PSHCE Association Programme Builder) to primary PSHCE education, covering all three core themes of the PSHCE Programme of Study; Health and Wellbeing; Relationships; and Living in the Wider World over the school year, with three topics per term. This approach allows different year groups to work on similar themes at the same time, building a

spiral programme year on year, whilst offering flexibility in terms of medium term planning. The colour-coded topic areas can be adapted to meet planning requirements, pupils' stage of development and needs and also to reflect the context of the school and local community.

We are for instance, flexible in approach and our long term planning framework is altered to best support our pupils, we might perhaps need to spend more time on a particular topic area or bring content forward if our pupils need it sooner.

In addition; PSHCE (and statutory RSE content) is integrated across everyday school life, grounded in our school ethos and values, exemplified in our further school policies and upheld by all stakeholders.

PSHCE learning is enhanced and enriched consistently through;

- Displays across school- PSHCE displays throughout school reinforce the curriculum enabling children to make links.
- PSHCE weekly lessons (and occasional additional sessions due to Covid 19 and looking to ensure every child's well-being is met in our caring and nurturing environment.
- Visitors such as emergency services, school nurse, dentist etc all complement our PSHCE curriculum and offer additional learning.
- Whole school, Key Stage and class assemblies always make a link to PSHCE, British Values and SMSC.
- House assemblies and/or family group time promote values and connect themes linked to Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) aspects that are PSHCE themed and celebrate pupil achievements.
- Special visitors (both face to face and virtually).
- Create reminders of positivity in the classrooms such as 'Positivity jar'. Children can write positive things about themselves and their class peers and then share them at the end of the week. 'Thankful jars' are also a positive reminder for us all to be thankful for what we do have right now.

Teachers generally deliver the PSHCE curriculum with support from professionals where appropriate. School staff are usually the best people to work with the pupils on many of the RSE and PSHCE topics as they are aware of each pupil's individual circumstances. At Bowes Cotherstone Federation we take pride in our reactive curriculum, responsive to the particular needs of our pupils, and adapt the timely delivery of RSE/PSHCE content to support children's understanding and development of skills to cope with changing circumstance.

### **Relationship and Sex Education Delivery**

As stated, statutory RSE content is set within the wider context of the PSHCE curriculum (and our personal development of all pupils) Relationship and Sex Education is focussed more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and non-human reproduction may also be taught as part of National Curriculum KS2 Science. The PSHCE Programme and Science National Curriculum are taught in every year.

Class routine: Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some pupils will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons a group/classroom agreement, formally known as ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. These link to class rules.

Children are taught and encouraged to use enthusiastic consent to give verbal permission and not feel pressured or forced to agree. This is modelled by staff using the language of consent to allow children to see that they have thinking time to make informed choices and are able to change their mind as they see fit. As part of everyday school life, children are encouraged to understand consequences of actions, but that they have a choice rather than being told, such as through the language of 'right choices' and 'wrong choices' in terms of behaviour.

When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly at an age appropriate level and within the group/classroom agreement established at the start of the sessions. If it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the age and development of the rest of the pupils, the question will be dealt with individually at another time. Children's whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.

More expert or specialist teachers and other professionals may be sought to support staff that are uncomfortable with teaching certain aspects of the RSE curriculum. Support and professional development will be provided for these staff, so that they can develop their confidence in delivering the whole of the RSE programme.

### **Vocabulary**

At Bowes Cotherstone Federation all staff will use scientifically correct vocabulary to avoid misunderstandings and ambiguity. The words which will be used for body parts are penis, vulva, vagina, testicle, scrotum, breasts and pubic hair. When talking about periods, the following language will be used: period, menstruation and period products, as well as talking about the body parts involved using scientific vocabulary. We value the consistency in approach across school to support our child safeguarding actions, supporting children to articulate their understanding, consent, safety and misunderstandings appropriately. It also makes the curriculum accessible for all, making our teaching safe and transgender aware. Gender diversity is sensitively considered through the use of inclusive language and all pupils receiving health education and changing bodies.

### **Assessment**

Assessment is carried out where appropriate, for example, at the end of every module and involves teacher, pupil and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills, and attitudes. A range of assessment for learning is also used throughout lessons and in everyday school life through questioning and children using their learning across different contexts. Assessment is based on teacher review of pupil engagement in their learning as evident in lessons, pupil work and discussion. Staff also share dialogue with colleagues about general behaviour, social engagement, health and wellbeing of pupils to adapt lesson content and



delivery specific to need. Staff plan for any subsequent learning or consolidation, based on pupil response and engagement.

Formal assessment is recorded using the learning objectives from lesson and unit planning to determine whether a child is working towards, at an expected standard or working at greater depth for different elements of the curriculum. This is in line with assessment in other subjects across school for continuity and a clear demonstration of pupil progress.

Our Class Floor Books and individual pupil books also highlight some of the areas of learning and experiences of our children within their RSE curriculum as a record of learning to share with others.

### **Transition information**

Information pertinent to pupil needs, including topics covered and gaps in learning is passed onto the children's next teacher through assessment records and transition conversations with previous and following teachers. As classes have mixed year groups, children have the same teacher for two/three years and as a result, staff are able to revisit learning and address gaps more readily through a two year rolling programme.

### **Blended and online learning (contingency planning since covid 19 pandemic)**

Staff understand that some content of RSE is not appropriate to be taught distantly, such content will always be delivered face to face and in consultation with parents where appropriate.

As a Federation, there is a day to day whole school approach to supporting children and parents, such as through self-regulating behaviour techniques. As part of a blended or online learning approach, TEAMS learning will be implemented, including live lessons with tasks set and daily assembly and story times to check in on children and their families. A wellbeing focus will be essential to supporting home learners.

## **8. Inclusion**

The content of lessons and the resources used will be adapted to meet the needs of the children being taught. All children will be encouraged to take part in the lessons.

### **Ethnic, Cultural and Religious Groups**

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic, cultural and religious groups (and all protected characteristics). Our school approach positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. We aim to ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We encourage parents /carers to discuss any concerns with the Head teacher.

### **Pupils with Special Needs**

We will ensure that all pupils receive relationships education and relationships and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the needs of all our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

### **Gender, Identity and Sexual Orientation**

The RSHE lead should ensure that the content is fully integrated into their programme of study. Schools are free to determine how they do this, we expect all pupils to be taught LGBT content for this area of the curriculum. We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with regard of sexual orientation and gender identity, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Pupils, whatever their developing gender identity and sexuality need to feel that relationship education is relevant to them.

### **9. Working with parents/carers and the wider community**

Here at Bowes Cotherstone Federation we believe the role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents/carers are the first educators of their children. Therefore, we will ensure that we work closely with parents/carers to ensure they are aware what is taught and when. This policy and information on what will be taught and when will be freely available on our schools' website for parent/carers to access. We encourage parents to view resources and access the links provided on our school's website to support their child's learning and development, for example NHS choices page.

In the current climate you may need to be creative in the methods you choose to engage and consult with your parents here are a few suggestions, online surveys, termly newsletters and opportunities to submit questions.

### **10. Right to be excused from Sex Education**

Many schools will choose to cover some additional content on sex education which is tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of their pupils. The school must make it clear what will be taught and consult with parents on what is to be covered before the final year of primary school. Offering parents support in talking to their children and informing them of the content can help empower parents to continue discussions at home and strengthen parental engagement.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from some or all the sex education that goes beyond the national curriculum for science and health education. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Alternative arrangements and purposeful education would need to be made in such cases. Parents should be encouraged to discuss their concerns and / or decisions with the Head Teacher at the earliest opportunity. The head teacher/RSHE lead will document the process and outcome. Parents/carers are welcome to review any RSHE resources the school uses and encouraged to ask questions to gain clarity when needed.

## **11. Safeguarding reports of abuse and confidentiality**

It should be made clear to pupils that all adults in school cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. This should be made clear when forming the class/group agreement.

A child under 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sexual activity. Any offence under The Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving a child under 13 is very serious and should be taken to indicate a risk of significant harm to the child. Cases involving under 13's should always be discussed with the nominated child protection lead.

Under the Sexual Offences Act, penetrative sex with a child under the age of 13 is classed as rape. Therefore, in all cases where the sexually active young person is under 13, a referral should be made to First Contact, naming the young person, and the sexual partner if known. Following this, a Strategy Meeting or discussion will be held. The meeting will involve a Team Manager, Social Worker, Police, Health Worker, Education and Welfare and other relevant agencies, to discuss next steps.

Where the allegation concerns penetrative sex, or other intimate sexual activity occurs, there would always be reasonable cause to suspect that a child, whether girl or boy, is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm. All cases involving under 13's should be fully documented and reported.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct but have a duty to share information with relevant others, if they believe that a child is suffering abuse.

*These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership procedures ([link](#)) with special reference to Sections 3 'Referral and Investigation' and Section 6.13 'Sexually Active Children under 18' – 'Young People under the age of 13'*

## **12. Monitoring and Evaluation of RSHE**

Assessment is carried out where appropriate, for example, at the start, to gather the baseline knowledge and at the end of every module and involves teacher, pupil and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills, and attitudes. As a school we will monitor progress and impact throughout the delivery of the RSHE

It is the responsibility of the Head Teacher/ Leadership Team to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHCE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

The Subject Leader maintains the moderation of PSHCE and RSE across school via the school agreed monitoring and evaluation cycle. This includes workbook scrutiny and pupil voice captures.

The Governing body is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the sex and relationship education policy and curriculum. The school subject leader feeds consultation findings, subject reviews and new information direct to the subject governor and via HT governor report where appropriate.

Ofsted is required to evaluate and report personal development, behaviour and welfare as well as spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) of pupils. This may include evaluating and commenting on the school's relationship and sex education policy, curriculum, staff development, and quality of provision.

Moderation cycle:

- book scrutiny
- pupil voice
- learning walks
- planning reviews
- subject leader audits and collaboration opportunities

## **Appendix 1**

### Suggested Books For Parents On Puberty

The Little Book of Growing Up- Vic Parker  
What's Happening to me? (Girls) – Usborne  
What's Happening to me? (Boys) – Usborne  
Growing Up – Usborne  
The Boys Guide To Growing Up- Phil Wilkinson  
Help Your Kids With Growing Up- Robert Winston- DK  
The Autism Guide To Periods- Robyn Steward  
What's Happening To Ellie?- Kate. Reynolds

### Suggested Webistes For Parents

Olliee – resource for mental health and wellbeing  
Sex Ed Rescue  
Parent Zone  
NHS Choices  
Childline  
NSPCC