

Braishfield Primary School

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Reviewed by Governors: 19th May 2025

Next review date: May 2026



BRAISHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

OUR MISSION

- *To inspire each child to develop a love of learning for life*
- *To grow children with the ambition to be the best that they can be*

OUR VISION

We want to continue to be recognised as an excellent school which:

- *Provides a rich, purposeful curriculum, which all children can access in a stimulating learning environment*
- *Encourages high expectations for our children so that they fulfil their true potential*
- *Fosters a warm, welcoming and safe community in which every individual feels valued and understood*
- *Equips children with the life skills to play a positive and active role in the future society which they will create*

Braishfield Primary School RSE Policy, May 2025

Aims

The aim of relationships and sex education (RSE) is to provide children with age appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health-related behaviour and enable them to show an understanding of and acceptance of all areas within the Equalities Act (2010). In addition, RSE will promote self-esteem and emotional health and well-being and help children form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work, in the community and beyond. Our programme of study aims to prepare a stable foundation on which to build the RSE Secondary Framework.

The core aims of 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.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality, identity and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

Statutory requirements

As a maintained primary school, 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).

Definition of RSE

RSE (within personal, social, health and economic education, PSHE) is part of lifelong learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It aims to give pupils essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and to stay safe on and offline. It enables exploration of attitudes and values, helps build self-esteem and confidence to view their sexuality positively.

The RSE Curriculum

Our curriculum is on the RSE and PSHE page on the website, which we may need to adapt as and when necessary. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

Relationship teaching and learning is embedded in daily practice (through our school values such as respecting ourselves and others). It is delivered within the PSHE education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE) and our school's well-being and values sessions. A range of teaching methods, which involve children's full participation, are used to deliver RSE. These include use of video, discussion, circle time, looking at case studies, drama and role-play. RSE will usually be delivered in mixed gender groups. However, there may be occasions where single gender groups are more appropriate and relevant. Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Family and relationships
- Health and wellbeing
- Safety and the changing body
- Citizenship
- Economic wellbeing
- Identity (Y6 only).

These 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, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by other relatives, 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).

RSE is best taught by confident teachers as part of an ongoing PSHE curriculum. Visiting speakers can offer a different perspective and reinforce the teaching within the classroom and can include: School nurse, RSE outreach team, Google - Internet Safety, NSPCC - Staying Safe and Local Community Support Officers.

Visiting speakers are briefed by the appropriate member of staff about the level of pupil awareness; ground rules of the class; the context/purpose of the visit and what pupils know

and what they need to know. Visiting speakers are given a summary of the school RSE policy, together with the RSE curriculum, which they are expected to follow.

For more information about our curriculum, see the PSHE and RSE curriculum pages on the website at www.braishfield.hants.sch.uk.

Roles and responsibilities in school

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Headteacher (Natalie Alldred) to account for its implementation. The governor who has oversight is Julie Holland.

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-statutory/non-science components of RSE.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE.

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

Staff continuing professional development

Staff development is supported at Braishfield via a range of means. These include teaching RSE through PSHE lessons using a structured teaching sequence following the KAPOW scheme. Staff meetings are delivered as well as other meetings that support the well-being of staff and pupils. Teachers are provided with support and guidance from the school by the Headteacher.

RSE and Safeguarding

At Braishfield Primary School we believe that our pupils should be kept safe from harm through safeguarding procedures, and educating every pupil about how to care for their bodies and protect themselves from physical and emotional harm. RSE lessons are part of our planned PSHE programme. These support our duty to safeguard pupils.

The lessons enable pupils to:

- Know their rights to be protected and kept safe
- Understand potential dangers they could face
- Be encouraged to adopt safe and responsible practices and deal sensibly with risk
- Develop personal skills to protect themselves and others from unsafe influences and physical and emotional harm

- Know when and who to ask for help when needed

Particular issues covered include:

- Bullying, including cyber bullying (by text message, on social networking sites, and so on) and prejudice-based bullying (also in Computing)
- Sexting
- Racist, disability, and homophobic and transphobic abuse
- Radicalisation and extremist behavior
- Substance misuse (also in Science)
- Issues that may be specific to local area or population, for example, gang activity and youth violence

We have a duty to report concerns about pupils who we feel are at risk of harm or when we suspect that FGM has already been performed (see Appendix 1).

Confidentiality

Staff working with pupils cannot offer unconditional or absolute confidentiality. Staff have an obligation to pass the information on to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Natalie Alldred or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) Mel Doherty, if what is disclosed indicates that a pupil is at risk of harm. Staff in the classroom establish boundaries where pupils feel safe and respected whilst protecting privacy. Pupils are reminded during lessons that if they divulge anything that indicates that they may be at risk from harm then this information has to be passed on. Staff use 'distancing techniques' to enable pupils to explore issues without talking about personal experiences, for example, using case studies and scenarios.

Visiting speakers when working in the classroom are bound by the same conditions and must pass on any information they feel needs responding to via the member of staff present.

Any cases of concern should be discussed with the child protection lead (DSL) of the school.

Consultation process

The RSE curriculum will be shared with staff and governors for consultation and be developed further by involving pupils and parents/carers:

- Pupils: RSE is taught within PSHE - we carry out activities and ask, what do we know already and what do we want to find out? (Before and after topics). This provides a baseline that supports development of our RSE programme.
- Parents/Carers: Curriculum letters to parents. Parent workshops.
- Staff and Governors: training; discussion at meetings; working party; audit of RSE and policy.

Working with parents and carers

Parents and carers have an especially important role to play in RSE at Braishfield. They will become involved in the consultation process in the development of this policy and the school informs and works with parents in the following ways:

- Curriculum meetings - for parents to discuss
- Before RSE lessons in years 5 & 6 a letter to parents/carers is sent out describing the RSE their children will cover. In this way, parents/carers can be prepared to answer questions at home.
- Information in newsletters and on the school website.
- Meetings set up for parents to discuss any issues.

Section 405 of the Education Act (1996) enables parents to withdraw their children from sex education other than the sex education that is in the National Curriculum (such as the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction and the spread of viruses).

If parents approach the school to withdraw their child from RSE they will be shown the RSE policy and informed what the National Curriculum content is and what curriculum content their child can be withdrawn from. (See Appendix 2: Science National Curriculum, RSE briefing).

If the parents still decide to withdraw their child, then other arrangements will be agreed and made for them during this time. Parents should be made aware that there may be impromptu discussion in the classroom at other times. Parents must complete the form: Withdrawal from Sex Education within RSE (Appendix 3).

Inclusion

All children and young people, whatever their experience, background or identity are entitled to good quality RSE that helps them build a positive sense of self. Respect for themselves and each other is central to all teaching. The RSE programme and approach is inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief or any other life experience.

RSE lessons help pupils to explore discrimination, prejudice, bullying; aggressive behaviour and other unhealthy relationships.

Teachers of RSE agree to work within the school's framework for RSE as described in this policy. Teachers' personal beliefs, values and attitudes will not affect their teaching of RSE.

Things to consider:

- Staff approach RSE sensitively, as pupils are all different, with different types of family.
- Staff encourage boys and girls to explore topics from different gender viewpoints and never assume that intimate relationships are between opposite sexes.
- RSE caters for all pupils and teachers and teaching materials are respectful of the rights of pupils with disabilities and how pupils choose to identify themselves.
- Staff ensure children understand that some issues may not be kept in confidence if the child is at risk.
- Staff need to be mindful of the school's safeguarding procedures.

Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring is the responsibility of the Headteacher and an appointed governor.

The school will assess the effectiveness of the aims, content and method of delivery used in promoting children's learning by lesson observation, sampling planning, questionnaires to children and feedback from parents. The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing changes to planning and delivery if required.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- DfE Keeping children Safe in Education (2024)

Appendix 1 Definition of FGM

"Female Genital mutilation (FGM) comprises of all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs whether for cultural or therapeutic reasons." World Health Organisation, 1997.

"Professionals in all agencies, and individuals and groups in relevant communities, need to be alert to the possibility of a girl being at risk of FGM, or already having suffered FGM. There is a range of potential indicators that a child or young person may be at risk of FGM, which individually may not indicate risk but if there are two or more indicators present this could signal a risk to the child or young person. Victims of FGM are likely to come from a community that is known to practise FGM. Professionals should note that girls at risk of FGM may not yet be aware of the practice or that it may be conducted on them, so sensitivity should always be shown when approaching the subject." Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education, April 2019

FGM is considered child abuse in the UK and a grave violation of the human rights of girls and women. It is a violation of the child's right to life and their bodily integrity as well as their right to health. It is illegal in the UK to allow girls to undergo female genital mutilation either in this country or abroad. People guilty of allowing FGM to take place can be punished by fines or up to 14 years in prison.

Female Genital Mutilation occurs mainly in Africa and to a lesser extent in the Middle East and Asia. It is not a religious requirement and there are no health benefits. It is a cultural practice.

Communities particularly affected in the UK include girls from: Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sierra Leone, Egypt, Nigeria, Eritrea, Yemen, Pakistan, Indonesia and Afghanistan; particularly first generation immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

This procedure often takes place in the summer, using the school holidays to recover (recovery takes 6-9 weeks.) It is important to be alert when a girl from a high risk group is absent from school for a long period or when a family request an 'authorised absence' just before a school holiday. Children might also be talking about a special ceremony or a special holiday abroad.

Signs that FGM may have taken place include:

- difficulty walking, standing or sitting
- spending much longer times in the toilets
- usual behaviour after a long absence
- not wanting to participate in PE or other physical play/activities
- acutely painful menstrual cycles
- asking for help or being anxious but not able to be explicit due to embarrassment or fear

All schools should keep their pupils safe from harm through safeguarding procedures and educating every pupil about their responsibility to care for their bodies and protect themselves from physical and emotional harm. They have a duty to report concerns about girls at risk from FGM or when they know that FGM might already have been performed.

Lessons in PSHE and RSE can give pupils information, learn personal and life skills and explore attitudes and values around protecting themselves and others from abuse, including FGM.

NSPCC FGM helpline: 0800 028 3550
help@nspcc.org.uk

Appendix 2 Joint Briefing by the Association of Science Education and the PSHE Association

This briefing is focused on the content of the Science National Curriculum for maintained schools. The briefing provides guidance to schools about their statutory duties to ensure that all children learn about puberty.

Teaching about puberty before children experience it is essential to ensure that pupils' physical, emotional and learning needs are met and that they have the correct information about how to take care of their bodies and keep themselves safe. Teaching about puberty is also considered a key safeguarding issue by OFSTED. As Janet Palmer HMI (OFSTED's PSHE lead) has said:

"If pupils are kept ignorant of their human, physical and sexual rights... they are not being adequately safeguarded. When inspecting schools ... inspectors are guided to check that the sex education in national curriculum science at Key Stages 1-3 is being adequately taught; and that primary schools have regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance on teaching pupils about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes."

"Inspectors leading Section 5 inspections have been guided to grade behaviour and safety separately and to take whichever is the lowest grade as the overall grade for the Behaviour and Safety strand of the Section 5 inspection framework; and if Behaviour and Safety are judged to require improvement this is likely to affect the grade for overall effectiveness."

In order to keep pupils safe, it is vital that they learn about puberty before it happens. NHS advice states that puberty can begin as early as 8 for girls and 9 for boys. Year 5 is therefore the latest time in the school curriculum when this should be addressed. The National Curriculum clearly states that subjects can be taught earlier than the recommended school years set out in the framework.

The dividing line between teaching about the growth and development of humans as part of the National Curriculum for Science, and Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) as part of a PSHE programme, is sometimes misinterpreted. For clarity, teaching about the changes experienced during puberty is part of the National Science Curriculum and all pupils in maintained schools must therefore be able to access this learning; this learning can then be built upon in SRE. Section 405 of the Education Act 1996 sets out the right of parents to withdraw their children from SRE but explicitly states that this right only applies to those topics which fall outside the National Curriculum.

The 2014 National Curriculum is clear that teaching about puberty is an integral part of the Programmes of Study for Science at Key Stage 2, with the Year 5 Programme of Study stipulating that it is a statutory requirement that:

"Pupils should be taught to describe the changes as humans develop to old age".

This must include teaching about puberty, which is a principle change for humans as they develop and grow older. This is supported by the statutory guidance referred to by Janet Palmer and the non-statutory National Curriculum guidance for the Year 5 Programme of Study for Science which states:

"Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate the stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty."

It is clear, therefore, that schools should teach about puberty in either Year 4 or Year 5 depending on the needs of their pupils. A high-quality science curriculum including learning about puberty will ensure that pupils get the learning they need. Parental right to withdraw children from this part of the school curriculum does not fall within this remit.

Appendix 3: Parent form: Withdrawal from Sex Education within RSE

Withdrawal from Sex Education within RSE at Braishfield Primary School	
TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS	
Name of child	
Class	
Name of parent	
Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education:	
Any other information you would like the school to consider	
Parent signature	
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	
Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.	Signed: Dated: