

Huntcliff School



SPARK
EDUCATION TRUST

RSE POLICY

Date of Next Review: September 2025

Responsible Officer: Assistant Headteacher, Inclusion

Policy currently under review

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1. CONTEXT

At Huntcliff School, we understand the importance of educating pupils about sex, relationships and their health, for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of RSHE can help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society.

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, evidence and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school's RSHE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

This policy takes full account of the school's legal obligations and has due regard for all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'
- DfE 'Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance', 2019 (July 2020 guidance).

Unicef's Rights, Respect, Responsibility ethos is embedded within the curriculum. In addition, the importance of e-safety as an integral part of RSE. As such the schools e-safety policy should be read alongside this document.

2. WHAT IS RSE?

The term *Relationships and Sex Education – RSE* – is used in this policy rather than *sex education*. This is to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage relationships.



According to the latest DfE guidance RSE is:

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

The guidance suggests that RSE should include these elements as follows:

Knowledge and understanding

- Marriage
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Violence against women and girls
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Sexuality
- Gender Identity
- Substance Misuse
- Violence and Exploitation by Gangs
- Extremism/Radicalisation
- Criminal Exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- Hate Crime
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

Secondary Overview

• Families
• Respectful Relationships, Including Friendships
• Online and Media
• Being Safe
• Intimate and Sexual Relationships, Including Sexual Health



Families	Pupils should know: • that there are different types of committed, stable relationships. • how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children. • what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony. • why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into. • the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships. • the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting. • how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
Respectful relationships, including friendships	Pupils should know: • the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship. • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. • that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. • what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.



	the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
Online and media	Pupils should know: - their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. - about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. - not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. - what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. - the impact of viewing harmful content. - that specifically sexually explicit material e.g., pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners. - that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail. - how information and data is generated, collected, shared, and used online.
Being safe	Pupils should know: - the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. - how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	Pupils should know: - how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship. - that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. - the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.



	• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others. • that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available. • the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. • that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help). • how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing. • about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. • how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour. • how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
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Huntcliff School addresses these five components through:

- The taught RSE & Personal Development programme
- Pastoral support for students who experience difficulties
- Provision of appropriate information through leaflets and books in the library and the display of posters
- Involvement of other agencies e.g. school nurse

3. WHY RSE?

3.1. Legal obligations

Secondary schools in England and Wales have a legal responsibility to provide a 'Relationship and Sex Education' programme. They also have a responsibility to keep an up to date written statement of the policy they choose to adopt and this must be available to parents.

Section 1 of the Education Reform Act 1988 places a statutory responsibility upon schools to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which,

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school

Our school Relationship and Sex Education programme will provide:



- Accurate information and combat ignorance, prejudices etc
- Develop mutual respect and care for others
- Programme of study addressed through PSHE and Citizenship Schemes of Work, Form Time and Personal Development Days.

In compliance with requirements at Huntcliff School our up-to-date written policy statement is available to parents. The DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance July 2020, the National Curriculum PSHE and Citizen guidance and the National Healthy Schools Standard support this legislation.

3.2 **The needs of young people and the roles of schools**

The overall aims of the school and National Curriculum are:

1. To provide opportunities for all students to learn and to achieve;
2. To promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

The aim is to prepare pupils to cope with the physical and emotional challenges of growing up, and to give them an elementary understanding of human reproduction.

The DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance (20190) (July 2020 guidance) recommends that 'Effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives'. The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/carers, in providing RSE. Research has shown that young people who feel good about themselves, and are knowledgeable and confident about sex and relationships, are more likely to be more discerning in their relationships and sexual behaviours and to have fulfilling relationships.

'Research demonstrates that good, comprehensive sex and relationship education does not make young people more likely to enter into sexual activity. Indeed it can help them learn the reasons for, and the benefits to be gained from, delaying such activity'.



3.3 National and local support and guidance for schools to develop RSE

Rates of teenage pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted infection in the UK are among the highest of all European countries. The Government has developed a comprehensive strategy to change this situation and RSE for students in both primary and secondary school is seen, alongside other initiatives, as a key element.

‘We must give teenagers the confidence and the information so they don’t feel compelled to have sex. No one should become pregnant or contract a sexually transmitted infection because of ignorance’. Tony Blair in ‘Teenage Pregnancy’, Social Exclusion Unit Report, June 1999.

4. A MORALS AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

Our approach to RSE will be conducted within a clear morals and values framework based on the following principles:

- The value of stable and loving relationships
- Respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, sexuality, feelings and views
- The development of relationships, including sexual relationships, based on mutual consent, rather than coercion
- The right not to be abused by other people or be taken advantage of
- The right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.

We also believe that students have an entitlement to:

- Age and circumstance appropriate RSE
- Access to help from trusted adults and helping services.

RSE involves consideration of a number of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school’s approach to RSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias. We shall endeavour to have an approach that is educational, rather than one based on propaganda.

5. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all students should have access to RSE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, the school’s approach to RSE will take account of:

- The needs of boys as well as girls: Girls tend to have greater access to RSE than boys, both through the media (particularly teenage magazines) and the home. We will consider the



particular needs of boys, as well as girls, and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

- **Ethnic and cultural diversity:** Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSE. The school will consult students and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.
- **Varying home backgrounds:** We recognise that our students may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- **Sexuality:** On average, about 5% of our students will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian or bi-sexual (LGBT). Students may also have LGBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. All our students will meet and work with LGBT people. Our approach to RSE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. Our pastoral support will take account of the needs of LGBT students. We shall also actively tackle homophobic bullying.
- **Special educational needs:** We shall take account of the fact that some students may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical difficulties that result in particular RSE needs.

6. **A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

A whole school approach will be adopted to RSE that actively involves the whole school community. Delivery is through planned aspects within Science and Personal Development plus discussion or moral and social ethical issues which may arise from apparently unrelated topics in other National Curriculum subjects. As long as discussion takes place within the context of the subject being taught it will not be considered part of the RSE programme, and therefore not subject to parental right of withdrawal. All groups who make up the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding RSE. In particular:

Headteacher

The Headteacher takes overall responsibility for this policy and its implementation and for liaison with the Governing Committee, parents and the Trust, also appropriate agencies.

Personal Development Lead

The Personal Development Lead with the Headteacher has a general responsibility for supporting other members of staff in the implementation of this policy and will provide a lead in the dissemination of the information relating to Sex and Relationships education and the provision of in-service training. Parents are the key people in teaching their children about Sex and Relationships by:

- Maintaining the culture and ethos of the family
- Helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up
- Preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings.



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Parents need to know that the school's Sex and Relationship Education programme will compliment and support their role as parents and that they can be actively involved in the determination of the school's policy. Parents will be encouraged to support the school's Sex and Relationship Education and access to this policy. The PD Lead will also make available the materials used in lessons to parent and arrange for any appropriate information meetings. It is their statutory right to look at the resources used to deliver the curriculum.

All Staff

Relationship and Sex Education is a whole school issue. Staff have been included in the development of this policy and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

The Senior Management Team (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of RSE in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resourcing.

Teaching staff - Not all staff are involved in the school's RSE provision. Some teach RSE through the Personal, Social & Health Education (PHSE) curriculum and some through Form, Science and other curriculum areas. However, all teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to students. Any teacher can be approached by a student who experiences a difficulty regarding sex and relationships issues.

Teaching approaches – students receive information through a variety of approaches to enable moral issues to be explored through discussion and to acquire appropriate skills. The SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning) approach should always be adopted. Where appropriate the involvement of health professionals will be encouraged, in particular when information regarding contraception is to be delivered.

Student Grouping – are taught in mixed ability and gender groups. However, the Key Stage 3 TYS roadshows are delivered in same sex grouping as evidence suggests this is more effective and allows students to ask gender specific questions, unless there is a specific need wherein arrangements will be made to teach students in appropriate groupings. Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to RSE and aided in their work by provision of resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training.

Non-teaching staff may be involved in a supportive role in some RSE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with students. They will also have access to information about the RSE programme and supported in their pastoral role.

Governors have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RSE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governor's meetings.

Parents/carers have a legal right to view this policy and to have information about the school's RSE provision. The school's approach to RSE will encourage dialogue between parents/carers and their children. Before each year group embarks upon its RSE programme, parents are informed by letter of their right to withdraw their child from RSE lessons (if appropriate) and



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given an overview of the topics the child will be covering. Parents are also reminded that they can have a copy of the school's RSE Policy on request, from the school office. Parents are also told that they can request to preview appropriate teaching resources that will be used in the delivery of their child's RSE. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from 'sex education' lessons which fall outside those aspects covered in the National Curriculum Science. It is important that a parent who requests that their child be withdrawn from RSE lessons should appreciate the impact of the social and emotional aspects of such exclusion, as it is likely that students will discuss the content of the RSE lessons outside the classroom. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents will be advised via letter annually for Y7 – 11.

Parental Partnership – under the Education Act 1993, parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the RSE programme. Parents wishing to exercise that right are asked to make an appointment to meet their child's Year Leader/Assistant Head (Pastoral). Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in later RSE without parental approval.

The school will seek and take account of parent/carers views and endeavour to adopt a partnership approach with parents/carers. This will periodically include information/education workshops for parents/carers.

The school nurse plays a key role in RSE both in terms of input into lessons and provision of pastoral support for students. The school will work in ongoing consultation and partnership with the school nurse and offer drop in sessions for Secondary students.

Outside agencies and speakers are involved in input to RSE lessons and as points of referral as support services for students. The school will only work with agencies and speakers who are appropriate to student needs. We shall work in partnership with them and jointly plan their work within the school. The school will also promote relevant helping agencies to which students can gain access.

Students have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate RSE and to pastoral support. They will be actively consulted about RSE needs and their views will be central to developing the provision.



7. THE TAUGHT RSE PROGRAMME

The RSE programme will be delivered as part of the Huntcliff School's approach to Personal Development and Citizenship.

Year 7

Relationships

- Transition
- Be kind to yourself
- Healthy relationships
- Unhealthy relationships
- Managing conflict
- Consent

Online and media

- Risk taking
- Online safety – digital citizen, keeping safe, legal aspects/support

Year 8

Diversity & Equality

- Anti-bullying- sexual bullying
- Anti-bullying- impact of bullying
- LGBTQ-what is it?

Relationships

- RSE-Family unit and marriage
- RSE-Gender expectations
- RSE-Gender stereotypes
- RSE- Harmful sexual behaviours
- RSE - STIs

Online and media

- Managing online information -online safety
- Role of the media- insta-lies
- Send a pic-online safety
- The Law-Online safety

Year 9

Diversity & Equality

- Being the same, yet different

Relationships

- Support victims
- Reporting
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Unhealthy relationships
- Domestic abuse
- Sexual health
- Contraception



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Online and media

- Online sexual harassment
- Online safety-exploited
- Online safety-exploited

Year 10

Diversity & Equality

- LGBTQIA+

Relationships

- Healthy relationships/Marriage
- Contraception and STIs
- Consent
- Gender Diversity
- FGM

Online and media

- Online safety – screen time
- Online safety - pornography
- Online safety - fraud
- Online safety – grooming
- Reporting and support

Year 11

Diversity & Equality

- Gender equality

Online and media

- Blackmail and pressure
-

Relationships

- RSE- Commitment
- RSE-Different relationships
- RSE-Domestic abuse
- RSE-Unplanned pregnancies
- RSE – Risky behaviours/ alcohol, parties and bad choices

8. PASTORAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS WHO EXPERIENCE DIFFICULTIES

8.1 The nature of support available for STUDENTS

The school takes its role in the promotion of students' welfare seriously. Staff endeavour to make themselves approachable and to provide caring and sensitive pastoral support for students in a number of ways. Staff may be approached for help on an individual basis and through the tutorial pastoral system. They offer a listening ear and, where appropriate, information and advice. The school nurse offers a health and support



service to students with a weekly drop in session available. Where appropriate, students are referred to the school nurse and/or external helping agencies. The school will keep up to date about the development of local services and national help lines for young people promote their existence for students and endeavour to form working relationships with local agencies that are relevant to student needs.

8.2 **CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMING PARENTS/CARERS**

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a student for help. Staff must make this clear to students. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made (see also the Confidentiality Policy, including Appendix A: Disclosure of a pregnancy, request for contraceptive advice).

It is essential that all staff who deliver RSE ensure that they always establish the ground rules of their lessons before they begin and that such ground rules are agreed by all present.

It is very rare for a student to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing.
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions.
- Parents have a right to be informed of any issue which is causing their child concern. We will always handle this kind of situation with care and consideration. The Headteacher would consider if there are any special circumstances which temper this right.

Where it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the student to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, students will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.



9. SOURCES OF FURTHER INFORMATION

This policy has drawn on:

- DFE 'Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance', 2019 (July 2020 update).
- RSE and the School's Responsibility (DCSF June 2004)
- PSHE September 2013 Guidance on producing your school's RSE Policy

and should be read in conjunction with the following school policies/guidance:

- Anti Bullying Strategy
- Child Protection Policy
- Confidentiality - including Appendix A: Disclosure of a pregnancy, request for contraceptive advice
- Equality Policy

Copies of these policies and further information about the delivery of RSE can be obtained from the school.

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Appendix 1 – Ground rules for teaching of RSE

Answering students' questions

The school believes that students should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a student may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide about whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with students and by taking an approach that encourages students to be mature and sensible.

A question box will be provided while the RSE programme is being delivered and the students will be told that if there are any questions considered too explicit for that age group, they would not be answered. The judgement about which questions could or could not be answered would be based on whether or not it was closely relevant to the programme the school has decided upon.

Confidentiality

Staff, parents and pupils need to understand school procedures when presented with certain issues. Students will be made aware that some information cannot be held confidential, and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made, certain actions will ensue. At the same time, students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support.

The following procedures will be adhered to by all adults:

- i) Disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse – the school's child protection procedures will be invoked (see relevant policy).
- ii) Disclosure of pregnancy or advice on contraception (see the school's confidentiality policy re pregnancy or advice on contraception).

Language

During the RSE lessons, the correct terms for all body parts and functions will be used.

The approach to potentially controversial and sensitive issues

All staff are aware that everyone has views on RSE related issues. However, while it is respected that everyone has the right to their own viewpoint, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented in a way that considers all viewpoints so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but are also encouraged to respect the fact that others may have quite different viewpoints. Viewpoints that have a negative impact upon another person or group of people such as prejudice are always challenged.



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