



# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

**Last Reviewed:** January 2026

**Review Date:** January 2027

## **Introduction**

This policy is a legal requirement and states the aims, objectives and strategies for the teaching of Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) at St Mark's CE Primary School. This is in line with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance published by the DfE in July 2025, which must be fully implemented in schools by September 2026. It focuses on healthy relationships, expressing feelings and keeping themselves safe and differences in gender. As the children grow older, it moves on to help them become aware of, and understand, the changes their bodies are starting to make, as well as the emotional changes that they may start to feel.

This policy has been written sensitively, taking into account the culture and faith of the children at St Mark's CE Primary School.

## **Policy Development**

The policy was developed through a process of consultation with staff and the Local Governing Board, taking into account the statutory DfE guidance, and the context of our school.

## **Definition**

Relationships and sex education includes lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of stable and loving relationships and that these relationships can take different forms. It is about respect, love and care. It involves children acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

### **This policy aims to ensure that all children leaving the school are able to:**

- Understand and manage their own feelings and emotions;
- Be sensitive to the feelings beliefs and attitudes of others;
- Respect themselves and others;
- Communicate their needs and be able to ask for help;
- Deal with unwanted pressure and know how to keep themselves safe;
- Make informed choices;
- Be prepared for the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty;
- Have the appropriate language to talk about themselves and their bodies;
- Have an understanding of their rights and responsibilities;
- Form positive and healthy relationships with others around them;
- Make sense of the messages that they receive about relationships and growing up from the world around them.

## **Moral and Values Framework**

Our RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) curriculum reflects St Mark's CE Primary School's school values and ethos. We believe that every child should feel happy, confident, valued and safe in school. We acknowledge the cultural background of our children and provide a multi-cultural perspective, which is representative of society as a whole. Everyone at St Mark's CE Primary School should understand and value the rights and needs of others in our society, regardless of language, culture religion, gender or special requirements. We believe that learning about relationships and growing up plays a vital role in meeting the physical and emotional needs of the children within St Mark's CE Primary School and supports our school ethos.

## Equal Opportunities

At St Mark's CE Primary School, we respect the unique cultural make-up of our school and ensure that we teach all children about relationships and growing up, regardless of their race, culture, gender, religion or ability.

We ensure that our RSE curriculum is accessible to all. Children with SEND (Special Educational Needs) will have this curriculum adapted to ensure it is accessible and appropriate for them. Where required, children will be taught using content from previous year groups if there are gaps in their learning, or if they are at a different developmental stage due to additional needs.

## Content

At St Mark's CE Primary School, relationships and sex education is delivered through the RSE curriculum, PSHE curriculum, and the science curriculum.

RSE/PSHE takes place in dedicated lessons delivered by the class teacher and support staff. The content of this curriculum can be found in **Appendix 1**, and is taken directly from Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance published by the DfE in July 2025. **The curriculum planning can be found on our school website, by following this link: (To be added when live).**

The science curriculum is a statutory requirement and includes:

### Key Stage 1

- that animals including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce;
- to recognise, name and label the main external parts of the bodies of humans;
- that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults;
- to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity.

### Key Stage 2

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction;
- about the main stages of the human life cycle.
- that living things produce offspring of the same kind but that normally offspring vary and are not identical to the parents

### Relationships and growing up is covered within the four main strands of PSHE:

- Developing confidence and responsibility, knowing their rights and making the most of their abilities;
- Preparing children to play an active role as citizens;
- Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle;
- Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people, respecting themselves and being able to speak about their feelings.

## Organisation

The Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, and PSHE/RSE Lead are responsible for monitoring the development of relationships and growing up education.

### **Provision for Pubertal Pupils**

Specific and appropriate education to prepare children for the changes that happen at puberty will begin for both boys and girls towards the end of Year 4. This helps to ensure children know and understand what support is available to help them to manage these changes.

These sessions will be delivered by teachers in single gender groups, with support from the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher. We also offer an opportunity for parents to attend a briefing session prior to these visits to discuss the content that will be covered within these sessions.

Supplies of sanitary protection are available within school. Girls may approach any female member of staff whom they feel comfortable speaking to and a sanitary disposal unit is available in the female **upper key stage 2 toilets**.

### **Questions**

The school aims to support and encourage children in asking for help, therefore all questions will be answered appropriately within the following framework:

- Correct and appropriate terminology will be used. (The use of correct terminology is encouraged throughout the school);
- It is inappropriate for both teachers and children to answer personal questions;
- Staff are encouraged to answer all questions but will use their professional judgment to decide whether an appropriate response should be given in school or referred to home;
- Question boxes can be used within discrete relationships and growing up lessons.

### **Confidentiality and Child Protection**

Confidentiality **cannot be offered** to any child. If any child protection issues arise, all staff and people working within the school must follow Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or one of the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads.

### **Use of outside visitors**

All visitors work within the policy framework.

### **Parental withdrawal**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum. If parents have concerns or queries about the RSE curriculum, or want to withdraw their child from sex education, they will need to make an appointment with the Headteacher to discuss this in the first instance.

### **Working with parents**

Parents will be specifically informed through Class Dojo about discrete sex and relationships and growing up lessons and be provided with the opportunity to view resources and discuss the specific teaching content.

### **Dissemination of policy**

All Staff and Governors will have an opportunity to read and comment on the policy either through the Every document portal or at meetings. The policy will also be made available to any other interested parties, including parents, on the school website.

### **Monitoring and Review**

The policy will be evaluated annually by the Senior Leadership Team and PSHE/RSE Lead. They will also monitor the planning, evidence of pupils' work/learning, displays and assemblies/worship.

**Links to other school policies**

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

Safeguarding and Child Protection

Collective Worship

Religious Education

Behaviour Management

Anti-Bullying

Health and Safety

This policy will be reviewed annually.

Signed.....

Headteacher

Signed.....

Co—Chairs of the Local Governing Board

Date: January 2026

## **Appendix 1 – Curriculum Content:**

Taken directly from the *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* guidance published by the DfE in July 2025

### **Relationships education: content to be covered by the end of primary**

#### **Families and people who care for me**

Curriculum content:

1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.
2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.
5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

#### **Caring friendships**

Curriculum content:

1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.
3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.
4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.
6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.
7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.

### **Respectful, kind relationships**

Curriculum content:

1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.
2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.
3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.
4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.
5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.
7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.
8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.
9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.
10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.
11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

### **Online safety and awareness**

Curriculum content:

1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.
2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.
3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.
4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.
5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.

### **Being Safe**

Curriculum content:

1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.
2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.
4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.
5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.
6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

## Primary health and wellbeing: content to be covered by the end of primary

### General wellbeing

Curriculum content:

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.
2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.
7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.
8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.
9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

## **Wellbeing online**

Curriculum content:

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.
2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.
3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.
6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.
7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.
8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.
9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.
10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.
11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

**Physical health and fitness**

Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.
3. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

**Healthy eating**

Curriculum content:

1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
3. The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
4. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

**Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping**

Curriculum content:

1. The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

### **Health protection and prevention**

Curriculum content:

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.
4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

### **Personal safety**

Curriculum content:

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.
2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

### **Basic first aid**

Curriculum content:

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

### **Developing bodies**

Curriculum content:

1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.