



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Policy written by ARE 15.01.25

Policy Agreed:

Review Date:

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

Relationships and Sex Education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.

A comprehensive programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

Rationale and ethos

This policy covers Walney School's approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as part of our Personal Development curriculum. Our RSE provision is an important part of our broad and balanced curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at Walney School, and which prepares our students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences that they already face and for adult life.

This policy was produced following feedback from staff and students on our provision and reflects the views of staff and students on how we can further develop our provision. The measure of how impactful our provision is should be how well our students are able to articulate and act upon their learning.

Since 2020, the Relationships and Sex education part of PSHE is compulsory in all schools.

In devising our RSE programme Walney School ensures that all statutory requirements from the Department for Education are covered and has regard to the 2020 statutory guidance.

Policy availability

This policy is available to parents and carers through the school website and will be promoted to parents via newsletters at the beginning of the year.

Working with Parents

Walney School believes that our RSE programme is of the utmost importance for all students. We recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. However, many parents find it difficult to talk to their children about these matters, and we are committed to supporting parents in this area of bringing up their children. We believe that the key to delivering effective RSE is a strong working partnership between home and school.

Under the Education Act 1993, parents have the right to withdraw their children from either part, or all, of the sex education delivered as part of statutory Relationships and Sex education (this does not include aspects of sex education covered by the Science National Curriculum.) There is no right to withdraw from Relationships or Health Education.

Parents are very welcome to meet members of staff to discuss any concerns they may have and to view the teaching materials. Parents wanting to exercise the right of withdrawal are invited to write to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Aims

At Walney School we recognise that Relationships and Sex Education is an important part of our PSHE curriculum. Our RSE provision is intended to support students to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, informed and independent lives, with due regard to the value of family life in all its forms.

Walney School aims to

- Help students to understand the value of loving, diverse and stable relationships along with developing an understanding of their own sexuality and sexual health
- Prepare students to progress from adolescence to adulthood with an awareness of the rights of others, and to develop the capacity to make choices in a caring and sensitive manner
- Enable students to conduct personal relationships with a full understanding of the meaning of responsibility
- Enable students to conduct their lives with confidence, knowing their own legal rights

We are passionate about ensuring that our students are fully prepared to deal with whatever life throws at them, now and in the future. We do this by actively encouraging our students to develop the Walney Ways, so that our students become **aspirational, curious, wider thinking, resilient, self-motivated, self-aware, and communicative.**

Objectives and outcomes

Our provision aims to build on primary school provision, and in an age-appropriate programme, deliver the following objectives and outcomes:

Families

Students 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**

Students 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, 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**

Students 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

Students 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**

Students 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 interest 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.

The Law

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions, including for example:

- 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)

Mental wellbeing

Students should know:

- How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- That happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
- How to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness. **Internet safety and harms** Students should know:
 - The similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
 - How to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

Physical health and fitness Students

should know:

- The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.

- The characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.
- About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating

Students should know:

- How to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer. **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco** Students should know:
 - The facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
 - The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
 - The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
 - The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
 - Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
 - The facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so. **Health and prevention** Students should know:
 - About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
 - About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
 - (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
 - The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
 - The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

Basic first aid

Students should know:

- Basic treatment for common injuries.
- Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed. **Changing adolescent body**

Students should know:

- Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

Curriculum Provision

RSE is delivered as part of our Personal Development (PD) programme and PD lessons are taught once a week. In addition some RSE objectives are delivered in curriculum time through Science, BPE, Vocabulary & Culture, PE, Outdoor Learning, or Food or through specialised assemblies, PSHE activities and school events, pastoral care and guidance and via visiting speakers.

Creating a safe and supportive learning environment

We will create a safe and supportive learning environment by establishing clear ground rules for behaviour in RSE lessons.

During RSE controversial and difficult issues may arise. It is essential that students are able to discuss these issues in a safe and supportive way which is sensitive to a range of views, but the teacher must ensure that students always have access to the learning they need to stay safe and healthy and protect and enforce their human rights.

This should include clear, impartial information.

Due to the nature of RSE education, students' learning may result in them seeking advice or support on a specific personal issue. Teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality; it is important for everyone's safety that teachers and students are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential. We will ensure that where students indicate that they may be vulnerable or at risk, they will get appropriate support by referring to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. We will also ensure that external contributors are clear that whilst working in the classroom they are bound by the school's confidentiality policy, not their own.

This policy is informed by the school's safeguarding, child protection and Prevent policies.

The Role of Health Professionals in the Delivery of RSE

Where possible and where opportunities are available, Walney School will work closely with health professionals, including doctors, nurses, youth and social workers in the development and implementation of our RSE provision. Any visitors used to help in the delivery of RSE will be clear about the boundaries of their input and will be made aware of our RSE policy and other relevant policies, and their work will be planned and agreed.

Teaching and Learning Strategies

We use a wide range of teaching and learning styles in lessons to deliver our curriculum and emphasis is placed on active and reflective learning that embodies our Walney Ways.

We recognise that active engagement in learning, rather than passively receiving information, is most effective in teaching RSE. We also recognise that students need a comprehensive, balanced and relevant body of factual information with which to inform their present and future choices.

We understand that RSE education needs to consider students' starting points. Students will bring differing levels of knowledge and understanding to any issue explored through RSE. Often this prior learning is more complex than we might assume. Where possible, any new topic in RSE education should start by determining students' prior knowledge. This will also enable teachers to make more effective judgements about students' development and progression in learning.

Research shows that attempts to scare or shock young people into making a healthy choice rarely work and can indeed 'backfire' by inadvertently creating excitement, curiosity or even status among students who accept the risk. This does not mean that potential consequence of the lifestyle choice should not be made clear, but balance is important. For example, young people frequently overestimate how often their peers take part in risky behaviour and feel that they are the 'odd ones out' if they don't do the same. It is important that they are reassured that the majority of young people actually make positive, healthy lifestyle choices.

Staff training

All staff delivering RSE are given opportunities to meet together throughout the year to share best practice. Opportunities for staff development will be actively sought and promoted to teachers along with access to the PSHE Association website and resources.

Equal Opportunities

At Walney School all students have the opportunity to take part in our RSE programme, irrespective of gender, culture, ability or personal circumstance. We strive to be sensitive to the range of religious and cultural views about sexual behaviour whilst still ensuring that students have access to the learning they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals. This includes clear, impartial scientific information on matters such as the changes of puberty, abortion and assisted conception, as well as covering the law in relation to, for example, forced marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM).

Our provision covers the concept of equality and legislation relating to it. Schools, like all public institutions, have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. Our RSE provision is intended to foster gender and LGBT+ equality, challenging all forms of discrimination and bullying. We recognise the need to be respectful of how students choose to identify themselves, understanding their sexual orientation and gender identity may be 'emerging'.

Teaching will take into account the age, ability, readiness, and cultural backgrounds of students (and those with English as a second language) to ensure that all (including students with SEND) can fully access RSE education provision.

We will not routinely exclude access to RSE for any student by withdrawing them to access other programmes, for example.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

Students are assessed by means of questionnaires before and after topics to show progression. It is important that students are helped to make connections between the learning they receive in RSE and their current and future 'real life' experiences. The skill of critical reflection is therefore at the heart of assessment for learning in RSE.

Recording and evidence of RSE work will be in a variety of forms, including written work, photographs, posters and videos. Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning at the end of each topic and relate their work to our Walney Ways and Employability Skills. The best evidence of the impact of RSE will be from conversations with students.

Students' progress in RSE will be reported as part of PSHE alongside academic subjects.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The RSE curriculum will be tracked using Gridmaker and monitored according to the school's monitoring and assessment calendar, with student voice having a major contribution to our evaluation, which will be presented to SLT, Governors and staff.

The school will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness regularly.

Links

This policy links to the following school policies and government documents:

- Equality, diversity and inclusion
- Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- PREVENT
- Bullying
- Online safety
- Education Act (1996)

- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2000)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Keeping Children Safe In Education
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health