



Essendon C of E (VC) Primary School

Encouraging everyone's light to shine (Matthew 5:16)

Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) Policy

Frequency of Review: 3 years

Date of Ratification: October 2025

Date of Next Review: October 2028

Introduction

This policy lays out the arrangements for the teaching of Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) at Essendon School.

Definitions

RSE: relationships and sex education

SE: sex education

RHE: relationships and health education

RHSE: relationships, health and sex education

PSHE: Physical, social and health education. RHSE is a part of our wider programme of PSHE education.

Legal requirements

From September 2020, under The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019:

Relationships and Health Education (RHE)

- Relationships and Health Education (RHE) is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education.
- The relationships education part of the new curriculum teaches what children need to learn to build positive and safe relationships with family and friends and online.
- The health education part of the new curriculum covers both physical health and mental wellbeing and teaches children how to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing; how to recognise issues in themselves and in others; and how to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

Sex Education (SE)

Sex Education (SE) is not compulsory in primary schools, other than the mandatory national curriculum for science which must be taught and includes content in related areas, such as the main external body parts; the human body as it grows from birth to old age; and reproduction in some plants and animals.

Government guidance on Relationships and Sex Education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-andhealth-education/relationships-education-primary>

Policy requirements

From September 2020, under the *Department for Education Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019*, every primary school in England must have in place a written policy for relationships education that meets the needs of pupils, parents and carers and reflects the community that the school serves. Schools must consult with parents and carers on their relationships education curriculum. At Essendon, this is contained in our RHSE policy (this document).

The RHSE policy must be approved by the school's governing body.

The RHSE policy must be made available on a school's website and copies given free of charge on request.

The RHSE policy must be reviewed, the recommended review period being every three years.

The RHSE policy must:

- Define relationships education.
- Set out the relationships education subject content, how it is taught and who is responsible for teaching it.
- Describe how the relationships education subject is monitored and evaluated.
- Include information to clarify why parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from what is compulsory in relationships education.
- Confirm the date by which the relationships education policy will be reviewed.
- Define any sex education the school chooses to teach other than that covered in the science curriculum.

- Include information about a parent's/carer's right to request that their child be excused from any sex education the school chooses to teach, other than that covered in the science curriculum.

There is no equivalent requirement for a health education policy but, in line with best practice, this RHSE policy also covers health education.

This RHSE policy also supports legal requirements relating to the following:

- *The Equality Act 2010.*
- *The Education Act 1996.*
- *Statutory guidance, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*

Definition

RHSE supports children and young people's personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its aims are to help children and young people to deal with the real-life issues they face as they grow up and that they will encounter as adults. Their learning will support them both online and offline, to make informed choices about their safety, physical and mental health, enabling them to live positive and fulfilled lives. At Essendon, we believe that RHSE is best delivered in the context of a supportive school ethos where, in line with our school vision and values, everyone is valued, positive relationships are promoted and there is a safe learning environment.

Aims

The aims of our RHSE programme are:

- To provide a sensitive and age-appropriate introduction to a range of health and relationships-related topics, ensuring that the content and delivery meet the needs of our pupils.
- To ensure teaching is linked to and grounded in our Christian ethos and values.
- To ensure all pupils are included by ensuring that content is culturally sensitive and appropriately handled.
- To provide pupils with the knowledge and skills to make good choices in their lives regarding health and relationships.
- Encourage positive attitudes towards community and togetherness, showing how friendship and mutual support can overall to overall well-being and good mental health.
- Build confidence and self-esteem.
- Prepare our pupils for the next stage of education and adulthood, including teaching about ambitions, goals, careers and financial literacy.
- Ensure pupils develop positive and inclusive attitudes to everyone, particularly to those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Roles and responsibilities

Governors

The School's Governing Board maintains strategic oversight of the RHSE curriculum and is responsible for monitoring its implementation and impact and for reviewing this policy on a 3-yearly basis.

Principal

The Principal oversees the operational implementation of the RHSE curriculum, as well as assisting the Governing Board in their strategic role. This includes:

- Overseeing the development and delivery of RHSE teaching
- Offering staff the opportunity to contribute to the development of the school's RHSE curriculum
- Providing monitoring information to the Governing Board
- Providing training opportunities for the subject leader and staff
- Communicating the aims, objectives and curriculum content to parents and carers
- Responding to parents and carers who wish to withdraw a child from sex education

PSHE/RHSE Subject Leader

RHSE forms part of our wider programme of PSHE education. Working alongside the Principal, the PSHE/RHSE subject leader will take responsibility for:

- Leading the development and delivery of effective RHSE
- Keeping up-to-date with the development of RHSE
- Supporting colleagues
- Monitoring and evaluating RHSE and providing necessary reports
- Liaising with parents and carers
- Keeping subject information up-to-date
- Overseeing external visitors and resources used in RHSE

Teaching and support staff

- To understand and implement the policy of RHSE
- To teach RHSE in line with the agreed curriculum
- To assess and monitor the progress of children
- To respond to the needs of individual children

Curriculum

PSHE lessons are delivered on a weekly basis. RSHE falls within this. Children need time to explore topics in depth and to reflect on their learning. Best practice suggests that for KS1 lessons should be 40 - 45 minutes long, while for KS2 lessons should be 50 - 60 minutes long. However, we recognise that the reality of the primary curriculum and timetable means that in reality lessons may be shorter.

PSHE and RHSE lessons should ideally be taught by the main class teacher, as these lessons are a primary method of building strong relationships between class teachers and pupils. Cross-curricular links, enrichment days, visitors and school trips should be used where possible to enhance the impact of learning in the PSHE/RHSE curriculum.

As the subject deals with real-life experiences, it is important to establish a safe and positive learning environment by:

- Establishing clear ground rules. Ground rules should include confidentiality, respect for others, privacy and boundaries
- Using distancing techniques including de-personalised discussions and role play
- Using clear language to avoid misunderstandings
- Avoiding prejudice and assumptions about children's abilities, desires, background and experiences
- Dealing sensitively with unexpected questions and comments
- Assessing and building on existing knowledge and experiences
- Providing a range of opportunities to learn, practise and demonstrate knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Allowing time for reflection
- Providing differentiated learning

The school's primary planning resource for PSHE and RHSE is the [Kapow Primary PSHE and RSE scheme of work](#), which provides full curriculum coverage, including all the statutory content, for each year group. The [Kapow Primary PSHE and RSE curriculum overview can be found by following this link](#). Teachers are free to supplement the Kapow RSE curriculum in their own planning with additional relevant and up-to-date resources and materials if they wish.

The Year 1 and 2 Kapow programme is used with Emerald class on a rolling two-yearly basis.

The Year 3 and 4 Kapow programme is used with Sapphire class on a rolling two-yearly basis, except for the "Safety and the Changing Body", where the class is split by age group, and the Year 3 unit is taught to Year 3 and the Year 4 unit is taught to Year 4.

The Year 5 and 6 Kapow programme is used with Diamond class on a rolling two-yearly basis except for the unit "Safety and the Changing Body", where the class is split by age group, and the Year 5 unit is taught to Year 5 and the Year 6 unit is taught to Year 6.

Units from the Kapow scheme of work can be taught in any order, however, the Safety and the changing body Unit is always taught in the summer term.

Visitors can enhance children's learning in PSHE/RHSE. The subject leader may invite visitors for whole-school events, while teachers may invite visitors to enhance their in-class offer. When inviting visitors into the school to support teaching in RHSE, the school will:

- make visitors aware of the school policy for RHSE
- check the content of sessions delivered by visitors to make sure that it fits with the school's ethos and meets legal requirements
- ensure a member of staff will be present in sessions delivered by visitors
- make sure visitors undergo the necessary checks as required by the school safeguarding policies

Safety and the Changing Body will be taught in the Summer Term and parents will be invited to view the teaching material and the resources before they are taught to the children so they can provide support at home.

Equality

Under the Equality Act 2010, the school has a legal duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between those with protected characteristics and those without. The protected characteristics are age, marriage and civil partnership, disability, race, religion and belief, sexual orientation, sex, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment. In addition, the school must consider the needs of those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). Our RHSE programme should therefore aim to meet the needs of all children, including lessons that tackle discrimination and foster good relationships between groups.

Right to withdraw from sex education (SE)

A parent or carer cannot legally withdraw their child from any aspect of the statutory relationships education or health education curriculum.

A parent or carer does have the right to withdraw their child from sex education, other than that which forms part of the national curriculum for science.

It is therefore important that all stakeholders are clear on which elements of the PSHE/RHSE curriculum constitute sex education.

Year 6: Safety and the Changing Body, lesson 5: conception

Year 6: Safety and the Changing Body, lesson 6: pregnancy and birth

In KS2, the unit Safety and the Changing Body also covers puberty and menstruation.

The following process must be followed if a parent or carer wishes to withdraw their child from sex education:

Prior to the beginning of any term during which sex education is due to be taught, parents/carers will be informed by letter about the content of the teaching and reminded of their right to withdraw. Parents wishing to withdraw should contact the school office by email or telephone to express their decision. Upon receiving a request to withdraw, the school will offer the opportunity for the parent/carer to meet with the PSHE/RHSE subject leader to discuss the content of teaching and application to withdraw further. However, this meeting is not mandatory, and the application to withdraw will be granted regardless of whether a meeting takes place.

The decision to withdraw will be shared with the class teacher and other relevant staff members, and recorded in the pupil's file.

Pupils withdrawn from sex education lessons will have appropriate alternative work set for them by the class teacher, and supervision arrangements will be made.

Safeguarding

RHSE includes sensitive topics and it is possible that discussions will prompt safeguarding disclosures. Reference should be made to safeguarding policies and procedures to deal with these appropriately.

As part of PSHE teaching, including wider whole-school activities such as assemblies, pupils should be made aware of available avenues of support. This is done through the use of supporting materials/agencies including NSPCC/Childline, protective behaviours, Zones of Regulation, CEOP Think U Know and other available resources.

Monitoring and evaluating

The Principal and subject leader will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating RHSE in line with wholeschool procedures for monitoring all subjects.

Professional development

The Principal and subject leader will assess the professional development needs of staff on a regular basis. Appropriate development will be provided using internal or external expertise.

Communication of policy

This RHSE policy will be available to read on and downloaded from the school website and copies can be requested free of charge from the school office.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Governing Board every three years.