



MARISH

Academy Trust



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Contents

National Context	3
1. Aims	3
2. Introduction and definitions	3
3. Policy development	5
4. Implementing the RSE Policy in Marish Academy Trust schools	6
Delivering Entitlement Curriculum for RSE	6
Responsibilities for Curriculum Delivery and Policy Implementation	7
Teaching Methodologies	7
Inclusion	8
Resources	8
Use of Visitors to Support RSE	8
Confidentiality	9
Child Protection	9
Sexually Active Children and young people	9
Staff Training	9
5. Role of Governors	9
6. Parents' right to withdraw	10
7. Revision History	11
8. Approval History	12
Appendix 1 Sensitive Issues	13
Puberty	13
Contraception	13
Abortion	13
STI's and HIV/Aids	13
Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation	13
Appendix 2-	14
The Entitlement Curriculum for Sex and Relationships Education	14

National Context

In 2019/20 there was a major DfE led consultation into SRE in schools. Changes and updates to this policy seek to reflect the latest developments and statutory requirements (which came into force in September 2020) whilst ensuring the Trust's ethos is at the heart of all we teach. Primarily, we focus on equipping children with the skills and aspirational drives required for modern British life, instilling the skills of resilience and enabling all children to form positive relationships. Hence the change name of this policy from SRE (Sex and Relationship Education) to RSE (Relationships and Sex Education). The emphasis on relationship is, we believe, the most important aspect of RSE, and it will be taught within the broader subject of PSHE.

The world has changed dramatically since the previous SRE guidance was produced in 2000. The internet has developed exponentially in those intervening years and the whole range of human relationships and sexuality are depicted on its screens for all, including children, to view. This policy seeks to ensure that children are supported in making safe and healthy choices, not least because of the dangers and risks posed by the use of technology, but also to enable young people to make informed and healthy choices about their relationships in a rapidly changing world.

Currently RSE is not compulsory in primary schools. However, at Marish Academy Trust, we choose to follow the National Curriculum and therefore we teach the elements of sex education in the science curriculum. We also have due regard to [guidance](#) issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#). and section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#). We do this in consultation, and support of, a wide and diverse range of stakeholders, including (but not limited to) parents, teachers and the governing body, as outlined further in the Policy Development section.

1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our schools 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 and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- develop interpersonal and communication skills in respect of relationships and sexuality
- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions and behaviour, including respect for themselves and others, their views, backgrounds, cultures and experiences
- develop understanding of the value of marriage, stable relationships and family life as a positive environment for bringing up children
- develop loving, caring relationships based on mutual respect
- understand the reasons for and benefits of delaying sexual activity
- understand the attitudes and skills needed to maintain their sexual health as they grow up
- recognise and avoid exploitative relationships and be able to avoid unnecessary or excessive risks value, care for and respect their bodies and be aware of and value their developing sexuality
- develop the skills to enable effective communication and negotiation within relationships
- access additional advice and support
- support the ethos of the Trust, namely that children leave us equipped with the resilience, knowledge and emotional intelligence to lead successful lives in modern Britain

2. Introduction and Definitions

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), is part of the wider agenda of promoting positive relationships, well-being and health for children and young people. This policy and our schools' RSE programme will take into account national and local guidelines and will contribute to meeting local and national targets as described in strategies such as:

- Health and Wellbeing
- National Curriculum 2014
- Every Child Matters and vulnerable children/troubled families
- Inclusion
- National Healthy School Status

- Looked After Children
- School Based Health Services
- Slough Children and young people's Plan
- National Service Framework for Children, Children and young people and Maternity Service
- Child Protection including Keeping Children Safe in Education 2017.

At Marish Academy Trust we believe:

- RSE is a central part of our ethos, values and wider PSHCE curriculum.
- RSE is an important foundation in the process of lifelong learning about ourselves, our emotions, self-esteem, relationships, rights and responsibilities, sexual behaviour, sexuality and sexual health.
- RSE takes place in many community contexts: e.g. at home, at school and in youth settings.
- RSE is an entitlement for all children and young people. Difference and diversity must be taken into account when delivering RSE including: learning needs, family circumstances, race, culture, religion and gender and parental right of consent.
- RSE is most effective when provided in a wider context of social and emotional development
- RSE must enable children and young people to gain information, develop and transfer skills and explore attitudes and values, in order to make informed choices.
- Effective RSE is responsive to the specific needs of children and young people as individuals.

Finally, RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – the executive leadership group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance

2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – a group of parents were invited to read and review the policy
4. Pupil consultation – where, how and when the pupils want their RSE delivered
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Implementing the RSE Policy in Marish Academy Trust schools

Our work in RSE is set in the wider context of our trust values and ethos:

- We promote a healthy, safe and caring environment for all pupils and staff.
- We provide a broad and balanced curriculum for all our pupils, having considered gender, ability and culture.
- We promote pupils' self-esteem and emotional well-being and help them to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, school, work and in the community.
- We prepare our pupils to confidently meet the challenges of secondary school and adult life.
- We provide sufficient information and support to enable our pupils to make safe choices.
- Through an enriched curriculum, we provide children and young people with opportunities to develop the necessary skills to manage their lives effectively, whilst safeguarding their own well-being and that of others.
- We help our children and young people to learn to respect themselves and others and move safely through childhood, towards adolescence and adulthood.
- We create a wider awareness of religious and moral values and respect for other races, religions and ways of life.

Other school policies are relevant to our provision of RSE: PSHCE, Child Protection, Safeguarding, E Safety, Behaviour and Anti- Bullying. This RSE policy will be made available to staff and parents on both schools' websites.

This policy is consistent with national guidance, in particular 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' DfE 2000. It also reflects recommendations from OfSTED, National Curriculum 2014 requirements and the recent announcements of proposed changes from the DfE.

Delivering Entitlement Curriculum for RSE

We understand the importance of ensuring that all children and young people in our school receive their entitlement to RSE and so carefully consider gender, culture and background when planning RSE.

We consider RSE to be a continuous process of learning. All adults working with children and young people have a part to play in supporting the delivery of SRE. The objectives of the SRE Curriculum will be primarily delivered in:

- PSHE through designated lessons, circle time, focused events, conference days, R-Time
- Other Curriculum areas, especially Science, English, RE and PE. For example, biological aspects of SRE are taught within the science curriculum.
- Enrichment Activities, especially our assembly programme, visits from the School Nurse, social skills groups, involvement in school trips and adventurous activities.

We understand that at times children and young people will benefit from varying methods of delivering the RSE curriculum. For example, we will use single-sex groups or small group teaching where this will help us to meet the needs of children and young people more effectively.

Responsibilities for Curriculum Delivery and Policy Implementation

- We regard it as the shared responsibility of all adults working within the school to respond appropriately to a young person's request for information and advice. All staff will be aware of the guidance on responding to children and young people's questions and will be encouraged to access support from colleagues where necessary.
- The RSE curriculum will primarily be delivered by class teachers in Years 5 or 6
- Those delivering RSE will have responsibility for assessing children and young people's needs and selecting appropriate activities and methodologies to meet these needs, supported by the PSHE Leader and senior leadership team (SLT).
- The Executive Headteacher and SLT are responsible for reviewing and evaluating RSE within the school
- Staff will be assisted in their planning and delivery of the Entitlement Curriculum by the PSHE Co-ordinator or other experienced senior leaders who will, with support, provide lesson plans and activities for colleagues, plan INSET to meet staff needs and liaise with visitors who support the delivery of RSE.
- Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.
- Governors hold responsibility for the RSE policy and will be assisted in implementing it by the Executive Headteacher, teacher/PSHE Co-ordinator/ SLT and whole staff team.
- The monitoring and feedback for this subject will be conducted through the use of parental feedback, lesson observations, pupil voice surveys and teacher feedback.

Teaching Methodologies

Ground Rules: It is essential that RSE is carried out in a safe, non-judgemental environment where adults, children and young people are confident that they will be respected. Specific ground rules will be established at the beginning of any RSE work, in addition to those already used in the classroom. They will cover the following areas:

- Appropriate use of language
- The asking and answering of personal questions
- Strategies for checking or accessing information

The areas of learning covered in RSE 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, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, 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).

Answering Questions: We acknowledge that sensitive and potentially difficult issues will arise in RSE as children and young people will naturally share information and ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it will be guided in a way which reflects the stated aims for RSE as outlined in this policy.

Adults will be supported in deciding on issues which are suitable for whole class discussion and which are best dealt with in smaller groups or referred to parents or other sources of support, such as health professionals.

When answering questions, we shall ensure that personal revelation of sexual behaviour or attitudes by adults or pupils or their families is discouraged. Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibility of abuse, teachers will pass this information to the designated Child Protection Lead in line with school policy

Inclusion

We understand the importance of ensuring that all children and young people in our schools receive their entitlement to RSE. As mentioned earlier, we carefully consider gender, culture, learning needs, level of maturity and background when planning and delivering RSE.

In relation to ethnicity, religion and cultural diversity, we value the different backgrounds of our children and young people and, in acknowledging different views and beliefs, seek to promote tolerance and understanding. In order to ensure the RSE Curriculum meets the needs of all, we will encourage respect and discourage exploitation. In relation to those with special educational needs, we review our SRE provision to ensure that all those with additional needs are provided for. When working with children and young people with additional needs we will consider:

- Their level of vulnerability
- Their need to learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- The need to promote self-esteem and positive body image
- Clarity about sources of support for pupils

Resources

The basis of our RSE Scheme of Work is based on the Folens PSHE and Jigsaw scheme. However, we avoid a 'resource led' approach to delivering RSE, instead focusing on our planned learning objectives and carefully evaluating teacher resources, leaflets or videos, before using them. We always select resources which:

- Are consistent with the Entitlement Curriculum for RSE
- Relate to the agreed aims and objectives of this policy
- Are suitable to the age, maturity, needs, linguistic proficiency and ability of the children
- Appeal to adults and children and young people

- Are up-to-date in factual content
- Are produced by a reputable organisation
- Do not show unfair bias e.g. towards a commercial product
- Avoid racial, gender and sexual stereotyping
- Encourage active and participative learning

Use of Visitors to Support RSE

In our school, we believe that RSE is most effectively taught by those who know our children and young people well and are aware of their needs. We encourage visitors to our school who may complement, but never substitute or replace, planned provision. We will work closely with visitors to ensure that the needs of our children and young people are met.

We will follow this Code of Practice when working with visitors:

- The care and management of pupils is the responsibility of the school at all times.
- In class teaching situations, visitors will not be asked to work alone with pupils, but will be accompanied by a member of staff.
- The school will be aware of whether visitors are DBS checked and arrangements will be made to accompany them as appropriate.
- All visitors supporting the school in the provision of RSE will be made aware of the content and principles of this policy, prior to their visit.
- All lessons will be planned in direct liaison with the teacher, taking account of the age and needs of the group and the context of the work within the PSHCE programme.
- Visitors will be reminded that whilst contributing to RSE in a classroom setting, they must adhere to the same confidentiality code as staff members.
- Any resources which a visitor wishes to use or distribute will be discussed and agreed with the teaching staff beforehand.
- The contributions of visitors will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure consistency of standards.

Confidentiality

In our schools we have clear and explicit guidelines relating to confidentiality which are outlined in the Child Protection Policy and in the Trust's safeguarding statement and which are listed below:

- Staff are unable to offer absolute confidentiality.

- We will reassure children and young people that staff will act in their best interests and that this may involve sharing information when the young person is at risk of harm.
- Children and young people will be told if information is to be shared (unless the young person is very young or has significant special needs) and will be offered appropriate support.

Child Protection

We recognise that, because effective RSE will alert children and young people to what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there is an increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. All staff are aware of the Child Protection procedures and will report the disclosure to the designated Child Protection Lead immediately.

Sexually Active Children and young people

On the extremely rare occasions when a primary-aged child, who is sexually active or contemplating sexual activity, approaches an adult, it is clearly a serious child protection issue. The designated member of staff will follow Child Protection Procedures and seek advice from the relevant agency.

Staff Training

Teaching RSE can be very rewarding, but we understand that in order to feel confident, staff need opportunities to explore how they feel about the issues and to share worries and concerns. We recognise that all adults have different personal beliefs and attitudes about RSE. We will discuss relevant issues and, where appropriate, arrange training to enable staff members to feel confident in delivering the Entitlement Curriculum for RSE and achieving our aims for RSE. We will also encourage the sharing of good practice and training in order to develop skills in appropriate, participative teaching methods. Those with special responsibility for the development of RSE will be offered opportunities to consult with advisors, attend training and network with other schools.

5. Role of Governors

The Strategic board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Executive Headteacher to account for its implementation. The Executive Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 6 below).

6. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE. In Primary schools the biological aspects of RSE are often the controversial aspects, which parents do not want their children to be taught about. However, these are in fact the statutory parts of the National Curriculum, from which they have no right to withdraw their child. We aim to encourage all parents to allow their children to participate in these lessons, but the Executive Headteacher will negotiate with parents individually in these circumstances. To help clarify this, please see the table below:

Subject and Topics	Compulsory?	Can I withdraw my child from these lessons?
<p><u>Health Education:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical health and fitness - Basic first aid - Changing adolescent body (including puberty & menstruation) (taught in UKS2) - Mental wellbeing - Internet safety and harms - Healthy eating - Drugs, alcohol and tobacco 	Yes	No

- Health and prevention		
<p><u>Relationship Education:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Families and people who care about me (including different types of families) - Caring friendships - Being safe - Respectful relationships - Online relationships 	Yes	No
<p><u>SRE related National Curriculum Science Topics (for a detailed list, please refer to Appendix 2):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Year 1 and 2: Find out about and identify some features of living things, objects and events they observe - Year 3 and 4: The importance of eating the right types and amount of food; Reproduction in some plants and animals - Year 5 and 6: The changes as humans develop to old age; The impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle on the way their bodies function; Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents. 	Yes	No
<p><u>Sex Education:</u></p> <p>Sex Education is NOT compulsory. Your child's school can decide if they wish to teach sex education or not</p>	No	Yes

Although the compulsory element of the Nation Curriculum is defined by the DfE, it is Marish Academy Trust who are able to decide how and when the content is taught to best meet the needs of the pupils.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Executive Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Executive Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSE.

7. Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	18/01/2012	HT	
2.0	22/02/2014	Exec HT	
3.0	January 2016	Exec HT	
4.0	January 2018	Exec HT	
5.0	February 2020	Exec HT	
6.0	March 2022	Exec HT	
7.0	March2024	Exec HT	

8. Approval History

Version	Approved	Comments
1.0	18/01/2012	
2.0	10/03/2013	
3.0	February 2016	
4.0	February 2018	
5.0	March 2020	
6.0	April 2022	

Appendix 1 Sensitive Issues

Puberty

We teach about puberty in Years 5/6, in accordance with the Entitlement Curriculum for RSE. Younger children may be aware of puberty and we will answer their questions appropriately, on an individual basis or in a whole class setting. We recognise the importance of ensuring that both boys and girls have a good understanding of puberty before they reach it.

We may use single sex groups to address particular needs, such as girls' practical need for information about managing periods. We ensure that sensitive arrangements are made for girls who have started menstruating. This includes the provision of sanitary disposal units and the discreet provision of 'emergency' sanitary protection. In fact following the Period Poverty campaign in 2019, which highlighted a national issue that girls may miss school because they cannot afford adequate sanitary protection, there is a free supply of these products available in school to all those that need them. Girls are taught in advance to seek the help of any female member of staff who will respond to such requests in a helpful way without embarrassment.

Contraception

We will not include lessons on contraception in our RSE curriculum. However, we recognise that many primary-aged children are aware of some forms of contraception and have begun to understand that adults do not only engage in sexual activity when they wish to reproduce. Children may ask direct questions about contraception, or may reveal knowledge (accurate or misconceived) about contraception in discussion with adults or their peers. We will answer children's questions in general terms and will ensure that our answers reflect the responsible choices adults make in deciding when to have children. This will enable pupils to further understand the responsibilities of adult life.

There are extremely rare occasions when an adult in a primary school may believe that a child's question about contraception derives from a child's own sexual activity or contemplation of sexual activity. In this case, the adult will consult immediately with the Designated Child Protection Lead, who will make sensitive arrangements, ensuring there has been discussion with the child and explanation of the confidentiality policy, to involve the child's parents and, if necessary, other professionals.

Abortion

We recognise that some children might be aware of abortion and that they might be developing attitudes towards it. They may also ask questions about it. Adults in schools will acknowledge these questions and respond generally to factual enquiries.

STI's and HIV/Aids

We will not teach directly about STI's or HIV/AIDS, however elements of our RSE and Science Curricula will prepare the ground for this explicit teaching later. We will discuss the different ways diseases might be spread and steps a child might take to reduce their spread. Some children will be aware of STI's or HIV/AIDS and may ask questions about it in relation to RSE or perhaps drug education. Adults in school will acknowledge these questions and respond generally to factual enquiries.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We understand our responsibility to ensure that RSE meets the needs of all our pupils. We will not teach directly about sexual orientation, but acknowledge that children will be aware of both heterosexual and homosexual relationships and may ask questions about these. We will answer these questions factually, in a general way, seeking to challenge prejudice and maintain our strong belief in propagating British Values, namely that we are a community that is respectful and tolerant of all persons in modern Britain.

The content of our RSE curriculum is a statutory requirement, and is expected of all schools nationally. All teaching will reflect the requirements of the national curriculum and reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, to ensure that young people clearly understand the wider implications of decisions that they may make. As a Trust complying with the Equality Act of 2010, we ensure that we do not discriminate against any protected characteristics, and ensure we create an environment that adheres to this legal requirement.

If we encounter examples of homophobic language or attitudes we will challenge these. Incidents of homophobic bullying will be dealt with according to our Anti Bullying Policy.

Appendix 2- The Entitlement Curriculum for Sex and Relationships Education

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 (Years 1/2) Age 3-5

Find out about and identify some features of living things, objects and events they observe, for example:

- the ways adults care for children
- basic hygiene routines, including toileting and washing
- dress and undress independently and manage their own personal hygiene
- describe their own appearance, including body parts
- value their body, physical achievements and capabilities
- have a developing awareness of their own needs, views and feelings and be sensitive to the needs and feelings of others
- some ways of being a good friend
- recognise the importance of keeping healthy and those things which contribute to this
- respond to a range of experiences, showing a range of feelings when appropriate
- be able to identify when and how to say 'no' and 'stop'

Age 5-7

- that animals, including humans, grow and reproduce
- that humans and animals can produce offspring and these grow into adults
- recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans
- recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and treat others with sensitivity
- know some diseases are spread and how to control them
- about the process of growing from young to old and how people's needs change
- the names of the main external parts of the body including agreed names for sexual parts
- understand they have rights over their own body
- recognise their responsibilities and how these have changed
- follow basic rules for keeping themselves safe and healthy
- value their own body and recognise its capabilities and uniqueness.
- how families are special for caring and sharing.
- ways in which they are like and different from others
- that they have some control over their actions and bodies

- identify and be able to talk with someone they trust
- be aware that their feelings and actions have an impact on others
- recognise similarities between themselves and their peers
- why families are special and how they care for each other

Key Stage 2 (Years 3/4/5/6)

Age 7-9

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include growth and reproduction
- about the main stages of the human life cycle
- name the main external parts of the human body, including scientific names for sexual parts
- understand the physical differences between males and females
- understand how their responsibilities will change in the future
- carry out regular personal hygiene routines
- who has responsibility for their personal hygiene and who will have responsibility in the future
- the responsibilities parents have for babies
- perceptions of being 'grown up'
- consider ways they affect and are affected by their special people
- be able to listen to and support their friends and manage friendship problems
- be able to recognise unwanted physical contact and ways of stopping it and getting help
- be aware of other people's lifestyles and beliefs
- personal responsibility for personal safety and behaviour

Age 9-11

- that the life processes common to humans and other animals include growth and reproduction
- about the main stages of the human life cycle
- that bacteria and viruses (including HIV) can affect health and that following simple safe routines can reduce their spread
- about the physical changes that take place at puberty, why they happen and how to manage them
- understand that physical changes take place at different rates for different people
- Know the facts of the human lifecycle, including sexual intercourse
- recognise their changing emotions with friends and family and be able to express their feelings positively
- recognise and challenge stereotypes, for example in relation to gender
- recognise the pressure of unwanted physical contact, and know ways of resisting it.
- the diversity of lifestyles

- others' points of view, including their parents' or carers
- the need for trust and love in established relationships.
- about, and accept, a wide range of different family arrangements, for example second marriages, fostering, extended families and three or more generations living together
- the many relationships in which they are involved
- where individual families and groups can find help
- about keeping themselves safe when involved with risky activities
- understand how self-confidence and assertiveness can help them keep themselves safe
- what makes a healthy lifestyle, what affects mental health and how to make informed choices
- respect other people's viewpoints and beliefs
- identify adults they can trust and who they can ask for help
- be self-confident in a wide range of new situations, such as seeking new friends
- see things from other people's viewpoints, for example their parents and their carers
- listen to, support their friends and manage friendship problems
- why being different can provoke bullying and why this is unacceptable
- when it is appropriate to take a risk and when to say no and seek help
- the diversity of values and customs in the school and in the community
- value themselves and identify positive things about themselves.