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Relationships Education and RSE Policy

Date Written/Reviewed: April 2026
Next Review Date: April 2027
Person Responsible: Candy London



Introduction

This policy is a statement by the trustees on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at West Leigh Junior School. The trustees at West Leigh Junior School believe that a programme of RSE within the school is an essential part of the curriculum. We aim to create an environment of trust and confidence in which we can:

- **Teach more than just the biological functions of sex. We see sex education as part of children developing a positive sense of self-worth and respect for others, where their understanding of relationships with others is an important aspect of the work.**
- **Deliver RSE in a way that allows all pupils to be able to ask questions and discuss issues that concern them.**

This policy has been produced by the RSE lead to reflect our approach to RSE within our school, in line with our statutory duties. The policy has been approved by the principal and trustees and will be reviewed annually.

Inclusion

All children deserve to thrive academically and socially. At West Leigh Junior School we adapt our curriculum to ensure it is accessible to meet different needs and high expectations are maintained for all. Inclusion runs through everything we do; it is not a bolt on. We are a community school which strongly believes that we have a duty to provide for the varying needs of our children in order to ensure that they are ready for the next stage of education and beyond.

We have high expectations of **all our pupils**. We firmly believe that with high quality teaching and effective engagement from parents **every child** can meet their academic potential. We are also passionate about the children's social and emotional development and believe that all children should be offered opportunities to ensure that they leave our school with high aspirations for their future.

We believe that all our children have an equal entitlement, and should have an equal opportunity to be supported and challenged to maximise their potential, therefore our curriculum is bespoke and allows children to make progress in a variety of ways.

Every child within our school can thrive and we do everything we can to make sure that happens. That means we:

- provide lessons that meet the needs of every child;
- make reasonable adjustments to lessons and our school environment;
- provide staff training to expand our expertise.

We think about both the long term and the short term. Our ambitions for our children include for them to:

- have personal, spiritual, moral and cultural awareness to learn and achieve;
- have good friendships and relationships;
- live a healthy and independent life;
- be successful in work;
- feel safe and secure.

RSE Legislation and Guidance

Children and Social Work Act 2017 - This Act made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England. It also made Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory in secondary schools. The law aims to ensure children are taught about healthy relationships, wellbeing and keeping safe.

DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Guidance (2019)
Statutory from September 2020 – will be replaced with new guidance from September 2026 -

this is the main statutory guidance schools must follow.

Relationships Education is compulsory and all primary schools must teach Relationships Education. Primary schools must also teach compulsory Health Education.

Sex Education is not compulsory in Primary. Sex education beyond the statutory science curriculum is optional in primary schools. If a school chooses to teach it, it must be appropriate to pupils' age and development.

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education in primary schools.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, including statutory content on puberty.

Under the National Curriculum for Science, primary pupils must be taught:

- that animals, including humans, have offspring
- basic life cycles
- changes in humans as they grow (including puberty, usually in upper KS2)

This content cannot be withdrawn from.

What is Relationship and Sex Education? (RSE)

Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right. (DfE 2025).

Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children. (DfE 2025).

The focus in primary school should be on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

By the end of primary school, children will have been taught content on:

- families and people who care for me
- caring friendships
- respectful relationships
- online relationships
- being safe

Health Education

Within the PSHE curriculum, we also cover the statutory 'Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing' education. This includes teaching children about the changing adolescent body.

Pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes

- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

Puberty including menstruation should be covered in Health Education and should, as far as possible, be addressed before onset. This should ensure male and female pupils are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience. (DfE 2025)

Teaching and the Curriculum

As part of the Relationship and Sex Education programme, the Science National Curriculum Statutory requirements (2014 Curriculum) are as follows:

- describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals. (Upper KS2)
- describe the changes as humans develop to old age. (Upper KS2)

These topics are both taught within the Year 5 curriculum.

Within the PSHE curriculum, we use a variety of resources to deliver our RSE lessons, but primarily use lesson plans and resources provided by Medway Public Health.

This means children will:

- **develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships;**
- **be able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work;**
- **be able to protect themselves and ask for help and support;**
- **be prepared for puberty; and**
- **know how a baby is conceived and born.**

The programme will facilitate the study of animals, including humans in all year groups, and plants in lower key stage two through science, whilst also covering the issues that arise in different relationships through PSHE planning. The delivery of RSE through PSHE lessons will ensure that RSE is not taught in isolation, and is firmly rooted within our frameworks for both science and PSHE.

In lower key stage two, the focus is primarily on friendships, bullying and the building of self-esteem, whilst also learning the correct scientific names for sexual body parts. We also revise the NSPCC 'PANTS' materials in lower school (also covered in KS1), teaching children that their private parts are private. The material will be delivered by teachers, with whom the children feel at ease, and support of health professionals will be sought as appropriate. We recognise that boys and girls will have different needs at this age, but feel that each group needs to be aware, respectful and sensitive to the other's differences, therefore, the same presentations and similar activities will be carried out by both the boys and girls. However, where it is felt appropriate, we will teach some lessons with boys and girls separately.

The long-term planning overview can be viewed in the appendix of this policy.

External Providers

The majority of our RSE curriculum is delivered by class teachers. However, there are times when we invite professionals to deliver certain aspects of the curriculum. These are listed below:

- Y3 – Inspire Dental – Dental health
- Y3 and 4 – Essex Fire – Water and Summer Safety
- Y6 – Essex Fire – Respect and Knife Crime
- Whole School – Show Racism the Red Card

Responding to Questions

We are aware that there will often be occasions for discussion when questions will arise from children about animal, plant and human reproduction within their science lessons. We will aim to answer these individual questions appropriately using the correct vocabulary.

We recognise that children are naturally curious and may ask questions during Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) that go beyond the specific content being taught or the planned curriculum for their age group.

When responding to pupils' questions, staff will ensure that responses are:

- age-appropriate
- accurate and truthful
- consistent with statutory guidance
- sensitive to children's emotional needs
- in line with the school's values and safeguarding responsibilities

If a child asks a question during RSE lessons that goes beyond the planned learning objectives, or relates to content that is not statutory in primary schools, staff will use professional judgement to decide how best to respond.

This may include:

- providing a simple, factual answer that does not go into unnecessary detail
- acknowledging the question and explaining that it will be covered at a later stage of learning
- redirecting the discussion back to the lesson focus

Staff will not provide information that is too explicit or detailed for the child's age or developmental stage; inconsistent with the school's RSE curriculum or policy or potentially upsetting or confusing for other pupils present.

If a child's question raises a safeguarding concern, then the member of staff will follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The provision of RSE at West Leigh is monitored closely by the senior leadership team and trustees. The effectiveness of the RSE programme will be evaluated by assessing children's learning and implementing change if required. Staff are briefed fully on the content of the lessons and best approaches for delivery, and the option to team teach with the RSE lead is always offered if staff are lacking in confidence. Teacher knowledge sheets are also provided with possible questions that children may ask, example answers and definitions of vocabulary.

Use of Materials

All materials used within lessons are carefully vetted by the PSHE lead and the majority are approved by the PSHE Association. All resources and materials are also shared with parents prior to the lessons taking place at the annual information session. These are also available on our website year round.

Partnerships

The school provides an annual opportunity for parents to visit and view the teaching materials used in RSE where they are able to ask questions and discuss the programme. A letter is sent out each year, reminding parents of the content of our RSE programme. Our policy and programme is available on the school website. Resources are also shared on the school website for parents to view, and parents are able to come into school at any time to view further materials or discuss these with the RSE lead.

Rights of Withdrawal

Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe. Parents wishing to withdraw their child should initially meet with the principal or RSE lead to discuss their concerns.

As a school, we have made the choice to teach Sex Education. If a parent does not want their child to take part in some or all of the lessons on Sex Education, they can ask that they are withdrawn. At primary level, the principal must grant this request. However, aspects of RSE which are part of the Science curriculum are also statutory and children may not be withdrawn.

Parents do not have the right to request withdrawal from relationships education, but relationships education should not include topics which involve explaining different forms of sexual activity. However, relationships education may include topics related to preventing sexual abuse, for example sharing inappropriate material online, providing teachers do not describe the nature of any sexual activity involved. Safeguarding information may require young people to understand different parts of the body, but this does not include descriptions of sexual activity.

Equality and Inclusion

Staff and trustees at West Leigh Junior School are committed to removing barriers to learning and raising educational achievement for all children at the school. They are committed to equality of opportunity for all members of the school community regardless of special educational need, socio-economic background, gender, race, religion and sexual orientation. Members of staff are sensitive to the needs of children and their families and endeavour to prevent stereotyping that may promote sexism, racism and homophobia. The RSE lead meets with parents of children who may find the topics difficult, whether that be due to a protected characteristic or SEND, and we tailor the curriculum provision accordingly for individual children.

All lessons are adapted to meet the needs of learners. Lessons are planned to be adapted to meet individual learning needs, appropriate to pupils' developmental stage, rather than solely age and flexible in pace, language and format. Teachers consider pupils' Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), support plans and advice from specialists when planning lessons.

Adaptations used within RSE may include:

- small group or 1:1 pre-learning sessions;
- breaking information into smaller, manageable steps;
- using visual supports, symbols, social stories or prompt cards;
- repeating key messages and checking understanding regularly;
- providing follow-up support where appropriate;
- offering additional processing time or alternative ways of responding (e.g. drawing, using symbols, or quiet conversations).

For children who are sometimes dysregulated and unable to participate in the whole class teaching, we use the following sequence:

1. In the first instance, children should be in class for these lessons whenever possible.
2. If they have to leave the room, then we should try and live stream the lesson to The Cove.
3. If this isn't possible because the child isn't in the right place to access the learning at that time, it should be noted that the lesson has been missed and this should be revisited with an LSA at a time when the child is more regulated and able to access the learning.

Safeguarding

When delivering such a sensitive topic consideration should be given to the safeguarding of every child and staff member in the school. Any disclosures made to a member of staff should be managed within the guidelines set out in the safeguarding policy. When delivering RSE to any group, staff members should be

sensitive to the pupils' background and current circumstances ensuring the pupils feel safe when dealing with sensitive topics.

Key:	Relationships and Feelings		Living in the Wider World		Health and Wellbeing	
Term	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 3	<p>Why are friendships important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. • how to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private. • that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. 		<p>Why is family life important?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characteristics of healthy family life, 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. • that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • that others' families, 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. • that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. <p>Protected characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marriage and civil partnership 	<p>How can we keep our bodies healthy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • about personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing • the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. 	<p>How can I show respect?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • the conventions of courtesy and manners. • the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. <p>Protected characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age • disability • race • religion or belief 	<p>What jobs would we like?</p> <p>Protected characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age • sex • disability
Year 4	<p>How can I eat well?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content). • the principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • 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). 	<p>What is bullying and what can we do about it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health. • that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing. <p>Protected characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age 	<p>What is the same and different about us?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. 	<p>How can I look after my body? (RSE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. • how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary 	<p>How can I describe and manage my emotions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health. • that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations. • how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings. • how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are 	<p>How can I manage my money?</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> disability race religion or belief 	Protected characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> age disability race religion or belief sex 	and confidence needed to do so. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources. 	behaving is appropriate and proportionate.	
Year 5	What does discrimination mean? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. Protected characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> age disability race religion or belief sex sexual orientation gender reassignment 	How can I make decisions to keep myself and others safe? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how information and data is shared and used online. how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted. about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. 	How should I respond in an emergency? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries. 	How do we grow and change? (RSE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle. 	Who runs our country?	Which choices affect my health? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. about safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. the importance of building regular exercise 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, vigorous exercise. the risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity). how and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.
Year 6	How can we manage risk?	What do I need to know about drugs, alcohol and tobacco? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking. 	What makes a healthy and happy relationship? (RSE) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed. how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed. what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). Protected characteristics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> marriage and civil partnership pregnancy and maternity sexual orientation gender reassignment 	How can we look after and improve our mental wellbeing? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness. simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests. isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support. where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom 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). it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough. 	What are my rights and responsibilities?	

				<p>about the benefits of rationing 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.</p>	
<p>Underlying objectives – Thriving Online</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits. • the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. • that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. • how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. • why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted. • where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online. 				