



Nurtured we thrive

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Compassion, Responsibility, Justice, Forgiveness

Member of Staff Responsible	Miss A Killick
Position	PHSRE Lead
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Date of next review	October 2026

Rationale and Ethos

This Policy is underwritten by our school Christian values of 'Compassion', 'Responsibility', 'Justice' and 'Forgiveness'. These forms an integral part of all teaching and assessment at Thurnham CE Infant School.

This Policy was first produced by Elizabeth Pateman (Deputy Head Teacher/SENCO) through consultation and has been updated by the PSHRE Lead in consultation with Senior Leadership Team and staff.

We define 'relationships and sex education' (RSE) as the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, focusing on friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other peers and adults. It is crucial that practitioners teach RSE: children need to learn about these relationships, as well as the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up and sexual health in an age-appropriate way. Part of this teaching is to enable our pupils to use accurate and age-appropriate knowledge and vocabulary about the human body.

We believe that RSE is important for our pupils and school because "Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way." (*RSE Statutory Guidance*).

At Thurnham CE Infant School, we value RSE as fundamental as it allows children to learn about healthy relationships in a positive way. They explore attitudes and values and develop skills aimed at empowering them to make positive decisions about their health and behaviour, thus enabling them to be successful future citizens and to help keep them safe. RSE also helps children develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.

It is important that RSE should not be regarded as a standalone subject. It is therefore not delivered in isolation, but firmly embedded within Personal Social Health and Relationships Education ('PSHRE'). At Thurnham CE Infant School, RSE is delivered to KS1 pupils by the class teacher, in mixed gender groups.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context of being committed to promoting the principles and practices of equality and inclusion through the teaching and learning of RSE. Our school's overarching aims for our pupils are to ensure that all children receive equality of opportunity - not only so that every child is included and not disadvantaged, but also so that each child may learn from the earliest age to value diversity in others and grow up making a positive contribution to society.

The key themes that will be taught in RSE at Thurnham CE Infant School are:

- Families (including different types of family)
- People who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships

- Being safe
- The importance of stable, loving relationships
- Respect for all, rights, responsibilities and the law
- Equality and acceptance of diversity
- Mental wellbeing
- Online safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Medicines, health and prevention
- Changing adolescent body
- Managing feelings and change.

Equality

We acknowledge and respond to the differing needs of all children, whatever their backgrounds, and are fully committed to avoiding all forms of discrimination as set out in the Equality Act 2010 (as updated). We understand the importance of providing a challenging and enjoyable program of learning and development and endeavour to make reasonable adjustments to enable all to participate, feel valued and supported, allowing them to thrive and flourish through all walks of life.

We ensure that all children have equal status and equal access to the RSE Curriculum. Consideration will be given to any particular religious or cultural factors bearing on the discussion of all issues and to the degree of explicitness of the concepts and presentations to be used. Consideration will also be given to the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

Special Educational Needs

Inclusion is fundamental to our vision and values and to ensure equal access to all children the RSE curriculum will be appropriately differentiated.

Early Years Foundation Stage

Although PSHRE is not taught discretely in EYFS, it is embedded throughout and intrinsic to the Early Years Curriculum as well as the routines and interactions of the classroom. Further, any questions raised by children in EYFS will be dealt with sensitively and appropriately as the need arises and generally by the class teacher in the first instance.

Roles and Responsibilities

RSE is a responsibility which the school shares with others. Provision for RSE should include opportunities for involving governors, parents, carers families and the community so that what is

learnt at school can be supported by appropriate experiences at home and in the community. As a school, we endeavour to make this as practical as possible, focusing primarily on recording children's conversations and comments rather than on directed and written evidence.

All members of staff, parents and carers are aware of this policy. Parents/carers are provided with opportunities to ask questions and address any concerns. This policy reflects guidance from the PSHE Association, the National Curriculum, the local authority and the government. It has also been prepared with reference to issues raised previously by parents/carers through open consultation.

RSE is led by the PSHRE Lead. It is taught by class teachers through the PSHRE Curriculum for approximately one hour per week. It is supported by members of staff, parents and governors who will be informed of updates to legislation and provided with opportunities to contribute to the teaching and learning of RSE. Teaching staff will receive RSE training on National Curriculum requirements and changes, as well as updates to relevant legislation, to support pupils with differing needs.

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Legal Requirements

Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools. This Policy therefore focuses on the Relationships Education aspect of RSE

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. Parents have a right to withdraw their children from sex education in RSE content that is not part of statutory Science National Curriculum. However, as Thurnham CE Infant School does not teach sex education, parents do not have this right.

If a parent/carer requests that their child be removed from RSE, we will reassure them and provide support by informing them of the statutory guidance and assure them that content will be taught sensitively. Copies of Curriculum materials may be requested and provided as appropriate.

Parents should also note that the RSE curriculum is essential in facilitating the school's statutory duty to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of their children.
- Encourage the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils.
- Foster British values.
- Prepare children for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life.

This Policy also supports/complements the following: Education Act (1996), Learning and Skills Act

(2000,) Educations and Inspections Act (2006) Equality Act (2010), Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014) Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory Safeguarding Guidance (2024), Children and the Social Work Act (2017) and Relationships Education, Guidance for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2000.

Questions arising from the teaching of RSE at Thurnham CE Infant School

Will I be consulted before these subjects are taught?

Yes. We engage and consult with parents/carers when developing and reviewing this policy. Parents/carers are encouraged to take up the opportunities when they are offered. We may hold forums which will be used to consult parents/carers on changes to legislation and this will allow them to share their views, opinions and any concerns they may have. There will be opportunities to find out the curriculum content, to see examples of materials the school will use, to ask questions and share any concerns. We will listen to parent/carer views, but we must deliver the required content. Parent/carer consultation does not provide the power to veto curriculum content. How the curriculum is taught is ultimately a decision for the school.

Can I request my child be excused from RSE at Thurnham CE Infant School?

No, for the reason set out above. The curriculum involves the teaching of the correct terminology for body parts and the changing adolescent body in a timely, age-appropriate way to ensure children are prepared for changes they will experience before they happen.

Can I request that my child be excused from lessons about LGBT people and relationships?

No. RSE aims to educate pupils, age appropriately, about relationships and diversity in the world they live in. It is important that pupils know that different families and individuals exist and are respected under the law. LGBT-inclusive curriculum content is not new: it has been a requirement for all schools under the Equality Act 2010. Our RSE curriculum reinforces this by clarifying that the lessons children receive in school must be inclusive of diverse families and be relevant to all pupils. The teaching must promote equality and respect, present material that is accurate and balanced, and it must be underpinned by legal rights and responsibilities. Content related to LGBT people will therefore be fully integrated into the curriculum, rather than being delivered in stand-alone lessons. Parents/carers will not be able to request that their child/ren be excused from this.

Will family diversity be represented?

Yes. Families, both in school and in the wider world, can look different from a child's own family. Pupils will be taught that our society values diversity and that all families deserve respect. Families are characterised by love and care, even though this may be expressed through different traditions and values. In schools, learning about families must be inclusive. The RSE curriculum must allow every child the right to see their family represented and all pupils must be confident and safe to speak about who they live with and who cares for them.

What will my role as a parent/carer be in RSE teaching? Will our family values be undermined by the curriculum in any way?

Parents/carers are partners with the school in this important area of education, helping to keep children safe and supporting them to thrive. We will inform parents/carers about what is being taught across each year group, so that parents/carers can support the learning at home before or after lessons. This gives families the opportunity to talk about their own values, experiences and perspectives. This information will be available on the school website, in the PSHRE Policy and Year Group Curriculum Information. The government recognises in the guidance that: 'parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.'

Will schools teach about a range of relationships: marriage, civil partnerships, relationships outside of marriage and same sex relationships?

Yes. The curriculum enables children to understand the importance of a stable, secure and loving environment for family life and will include the range of different family types that can provide this. Teaching will therefore represent the full range of committed and mutually supportive stable relationships in our society, including religious and civil marriages, civil partnerships, and relationships outside of formal commitment. The range of families represented will include stepfamilies, same-sex parents, grandparents as parents, adoptive families, and more.

Specific Issues Raised during the teaching and learning of RSE

Teachers have authority to give information, but not to offer advice. Children's questions about RSE are treated sensitively and simply, often without requiring highly sophisticated or complicated responses. If an individual pupil raises a particularly explicit issue, teachers should exercise their discretion and judgement about how to deal with it.

Teachers should normally discuss the child's concerns first with the parents to see how they would like the matter handled. Where the parents wish them to do so, it may be appropriate to respond individually to the child's question outside the classroom. We do not intend to take over the role of parents and wish to work with them.

Curriculum Design

Our RSE programme follows a model recommended by the PSHE Association and is an integral part of our whole school PSHRE education provision. It covers a range of core themes including Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World. It reflects the SRE Guidance that RSE... *'is a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care...'*

Our programme is inclusive of children from all backgrounds. These include, but are not restricted to pupils with SEN, LGBT pupils, pupils from varied cultural backgrounds, sexual orientation and same sex families.

Our RSE programme will be planned and delivered through a range of teaching methods and interactive activities. Active learning methods include encouraging children to share their views and opinions and recording this through videos, on post-it notes and through circle maps and other diagrams.

Lessons will be differentiated by class teachers to ensure that children are being supported and challenged. Teachers will also ensure that lessons are delivered practically to provide children with opportunities to share and discuss their individual views. Every child will be acknowledged and heard and teachers will ensure that both practitioners and children are respectful towards the different opinions other children may have.

High quality resources will support our RSE provision and will be regularly reviewed by the PSHRE Lead.

Teaching and Learning

These particular elements of RSE will be covered. Pupils will:

- Learn about the different forms of human relationships/friendships.
- Learn about the importance of communication and values such as respect (for self and others), equality, responsibility, care and empathy.
- Learn about specific body parts (including; penis, vagina, vulva, testicles). Please note that this is taught in Year 2, not in EYFS and Year 1.
- Learn about the changes that occur to their bodies during the development from childhood to adulthood.
- Reflect upon how to make informed and safe choices concerning relationships and healthy lifestyles.
- Learn about individual rights and responsibilities within relationships.

The majority of RSE is taught discretely to children as an element in our structured PSHRE curriculum (more details of which may be found in the PSHRE Policy). It is taught sensitively and age appropriately with the focus heavily on relationships. Please note that RSE may be separately addressed through other curriculum areas such as RE, Science and English.

As previously stated, RSE is taught through an array of practical activities, which promote both healthy dialogue and understanding. These include circle time activities, games, role play scenarios, verbal discussions and other multimedia tools and techniques. All input into RSE lessons is part of a planned program and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance.

Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress by talking and about what they have learned, in a safe and respectful environment.

Alongside this, the children are encouraged to develop attitudes which will enhance their lives and relationships in several ways, to prepare them for adolescence and subsequently adulthood, as we fulfil the requirement of the RSE Guidance to '*...promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and*

physical developments of pupils...’ and ‘...prepare pupils ... for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.’

Safe and Effective Practice

Through RSE, children explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health and behaviour. We therefore endeavour to create an atmosphere where children feel comfortable, able to question and talk openly.

We will ensure a safe learning environment by teaching and reinforcing the ground rules for each session. We will use distancing techniques such as role play and storytelling in order to encourage open discussion while protecting the feelings of the children. As appropriate, we will offer the children the opportunity to pose questions anonymously and respond accordingly.

Children’s questions will be answered by the adults in the school who work with the children, usually the class teacher. Sensitive issues will be handled by the class teacher who knows the child the best.

All staff teaching RSE will be supported by following the three school rules and our Christian values.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Teachers will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, as appropriate.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to have been fully vetted by the Headteacher and shall be accompanied at all times.

Child Protection and Confidentiality

Teachers must never promise confidentiality but should handle a sensitive question with tact i.e. ‘I will listen to you and do my best to help you but I may need help from other adults to help you sort this out’. It may be necessary to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead if a child protection issue is raised.

Engaging Stakeholders

Parents are provided with the opportunity to determine and discuss the school’s programme

through: RSE curriculum meetings, parents' evening, and an open-door policy. To promote effective communication and discussion between parents and their children, we notify parents through termly Curriculum Information letters which identify when aspects of RSE will be taught.

Parents will be informed about this policy through the school website.

We are committed to working with parents and carers by working ensuring that they are fully aware of what is being taught and provide additional resources and support through our website, Seesaw and links to other sources.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities and it will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils.

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through understanding where the children currently are and where they need to move onto next.

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHRE Lead through planning scrutinies, learning walks, pupil voice and Floor Book (evidence of learning) monitoring.

Professional Development for Staff

Governors will be informed of this Policy and the RSE Curriculum through website updates and governor meetings.

Staff are kept informed of developments in key aspects of RSE, through regular training provided at staff meetings and INSET days.

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years and in light of any related issue that may occur, including any new findings arising from educational research, new or amended legislation as well as local or national guidance.

Policy Review Date

This policy will be reviewed in September 2026 to ensure that it takes into account current legislation, is relevant and is appropriate for our cohort.