



Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

(to be read in conjunction with the Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) policy)

Policy owner	MAT Subject Lead for RSE and PSHE
Policy approved by	MAT Board
Policy last approved	November 2025
Review frequency	Annual
Policy next approved	July 2026

Aims

The aims of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at our schools are to:

- Provide a clear framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of physical and emotional development, including the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe their bodies and emotions
- Help pupils develop self-respect, confidence, empathy and resilience
- Create a positive culture around relationships, respect and family life
- Help pupils understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships
- Enable pupils to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and seek help and support

St Barnabas MAT considers Relationships and Sex Education to be an integral part of the PSHE curriculum. We aim to offer pupils a carefully planned programme on human development, relationships, safety and family life within a safe and supportive environment. Teaching is matched to pupils' age and level of maturity and is underpinned by our school values.

These aims complement those of the science curriculum in KS1 and KS2 and contribute directly to pupils' Personal Development, as outlined in the Ofsted Inspection Framework.

Statutory requirements

As a primary school, we must provide Relationships Education to all pupils in accordance with section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Primary schools are not required to provide sex education beyond what is included in the statutory science curriculum, although we do teach the statutory elements of human development and reproduction within science.

In teaching RSE, we have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 403 of the Education Act 1996, including:

- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (DfE, 2019)
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (DfE, 2025)

This policy also adheres to the July 2025 Revised Statutory Guidance on RSHE and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025. We recognize that these updates prioritise parental transparency and age-appropriate content 'floors'.

At our schools, RSE is taught as set out in this policy.

Definition

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils. It involves learning about:

- Relationships and friendships
- Family life and different family structures
- Personal identity and respect
- Physical and emotional wellbeing
- Keeping safe, including online safety

In line with national guidance, the school does not teach the concept of 'gender identity' as a factual concept. We maintain a neutral stance on contested beliefs and focus on biological sex as defined by the Equality Act 2010. We ensure all pupils are treated with dignity and respect while focusing on the facts of biological development.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring values and attitudes. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is embedded within our PSHE curriculum and follows the PSHE Association Programme of Study, structured around three core themes:

Core Theme 1: Health and Wellbeing

- What is meant by a healthy lifestyle
- Maintaining physical, mental and emotional health
- Managing risks to health and wellbeing
- Keeping physically and emotionally safe
- Managing change, including puberty, transition and loss

- Recognising sources of help and support
- Responding in an emergency

Core Theme 2: Relationships

- Developing and maintaining healthy relationships
- Recognising and managing emotions
- Identifying and responding to unsafe or negative relationships, including bullying and abuse
- Respecting equality and diversity
- Understanding online relationships and digital safety

The curriculum includes specific content on AI-generated content and deepfakes, teaching children to identify manipulated media and understand the influence of online algorithms on their self-image.

Core Theme 3: Living in the Wider World

- Respect for self and others
- Rights and responsibilities within families and communities
- Belonging to different groups and communities
- Respecting and protecting the environment
- Basic understanding of money and enterprise

The curriculum has been developed with regard to pupils' age, needs and maturity. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, staff respond in an age-appropriate, factual and sensitive manner, ensuring pupils do not seek answers online.

Primary sex education

Non-statutory Sex Education (specifically the mechanics of human reproduction) is not taught before Year 5. In Years R-4, the curriculum focuses exclusively on Relationships, Health, and the statutory Science curriculum.

Where included, primary sex education focuses on:

- Sexual difference and correct naming of body parts
- Preparing boys and girls for the changes of puberty
- Understanding the importance of physical hygiene
- Menstruation and wet dreams as a normal part of growing up
- How a baby is conceived and born, taught in the context of relationships
- Knowing where to find help and support

Further information about our curriculum can be found in the school's curriculum statement of intent.

Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught primarily through PSHE lessons, but is also supported through learning in Science, RE, PE and Computing, where appropriate.

Teaching:

- Reflects that families and relationships take many forms
- Promotes respect and inclusion
- Avoids stigma based on home circumstances
- Encourages discussion in a safe and respectful environment

RSE also takes place beyond discrete lessons, through the wider life of the school, including behaviour expectations and relationships in the playground. All staff share responsibility for promoting the aims of this policy.

Science curriculum

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children learn about life cycles and relationships through ongoing personal, social and emotional development.

Key Stage 1

Pupils learn to:

- Identify and name basic body parts and senses
- Understand that humans and animals grow and change
- Learn about basic needs for survival
- Understand the importance of exercise, diet and hygiene

Key Stage 2

Pupils learn to:

- Describe changes across the human life cycle
- Understand puberty and physical development
- Learn about reproduction in plants and animals
- Understand the impact of lifestyle choices on the body

Teaching and learning

In Key Stage 2, pupils are taught about puberty and body changes in a carefully managed and age-appropriate way. Opportunities may be provided for single-sex discussions. Staff answer questions sensitively and ensure pupils know how to seek help.

By the end of KS2, pupils understand:

- How bodies change during puberty
- What menstruation is and how it affects women
- How babies are born

Relationships education focuses on:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships

- Online relationships
- Being safe

Teaching reflects diverse family structures and recognises that some pupils may have different experiences of care and support.

Roles and responsibilities

Board of Trustees

- Approves and reviews the policy

Headteacher / Head of School

- Ensures consistent delivery
- Manages parental withdrawal requests
- Ensures staff training and monitoring

All staff

- Deliver RSE sensitively
- Model positive attitudes
- Respond appropriately to pupil questions
- Follow safeguarding procedures

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education.

Parents may request withdrawal from the non-statutory elements of sex education. Requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Right to Transparency: Parents have an absolute right to review all curriculum materials, including slides, handouts, and video content. The school will not use materials from external providers who

attempt to restrict parental access via copyright or non-disclosure agreements. Current DfE guidance confirms that sharing materials with parents for transparency does not breach copyright law.

Alternative supervised work will be provided.

There is no right to withdraw from statutory science content.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

RSE is delivered within a strong safeguarding framework. Staff follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

Staff do not promise confidentiality. Any safeguarding concern or disclosure is reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Special Educational Needs

Pupils with SEND are fully included in RSE lessons. Teaching is adapted where necessary to ensure understanding and inclusion.

Equal opportunities

RSE is delivered to ensure equality of access for all pupils, regardless of gender, race, disability, religion or family background.

Complaints procedure

Concerns about RSE should be raised with the class teacher in the first instance. Parents may follow the school or Trust complaints procedure if needed.

Monitoring arrangements

RSE is monitored through:

- Planning scrutiny
- Learning walks
- Pupil voice
- Work scrutiny
- Subject leader review

The policy is reviewed annually by the PSHE/RSE MAT lead and approved by trustees.

Linked policies

- PSHE Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Policy