

# HITHERFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE



## Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

### Our Vision Statement

**‘Our vision is to create a school community where everyone feels valued, has the opportunity to explore and develop their strengths and is able to participate in new experiences. We aim to become an inspirational school to produce good citizens for the future in an atmosphere that promotes confidence, high academic achievement, physical health and emotional well being.’**

### Change Record

| Date of review | Authors       | Date of next review |
|----------------|---------------|---------------------|
| March 2025     | Heather Simms | March 2026          |

## **The Importance of PSHE**

This policy covers Hitherfield's approach to Relationships and Sex Education teaching within the Personal Social Health and Economic Curriculum in Key Stages One and Two (Years 1 to 6).

It is written to provide clarity of purpose both to the wider school community and to class teachers delivering teaching. Teachers will look to it to guide their lesson planning, and to put boundaries around the issues they can explore with children and young people. This is of great importance both in terms of guiding teachers and protecting them.

This policy is also written for parents, who will look to see both the RSE curriculum content and the values the school is promoting. It will also inform health professionals, visiting speakers and so on, who will want to know the aims, objectives and values the school's RSE promotes, agreed teaching methodologies and boundaries for their work with young people.

## **Rationale and Ethos**

At Hitherfield we believe our most important job is to nurture the personal development of our children. During their time with us our intention is to: support them in maintaining their physical health and mental well-being; nurture their ability to form positive respectful friendships; develop their knowledge of the wider world and how they might contribute to it and teach them how to make safe and informed decisions during their school years.

Throughout a child's journey through Hitherfield (Nursery to Year 6) they can expect to see images of relationships and families that reflect the vibrant and diverse community that we support. In lessons, assemblies and on display boards stories and images used will show a range of different relationships and family types; giving precedence to none but space to all. Faith perspectives regarding relationships will be shared and discussed if and when appropriate. Assemblies and other subjects also teach the British Values, including that of Mutual Respect and Tolerance of Different Faiths and Beliefs.

Hitherfield's overarching aim for all our pupils is that they grow into happy and confident adults ready to contribute positively to the world around them. One of the ways we support the children's personal development is through a structured progression of age appropriate lessons as part of our comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum, which is based on the Thematic Overview from the PSHE Association and covers three main strands of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) teaching is embedded within both the Health and Wellbeing and our Relationship modules of our PSHE curriculum.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Responsibility for policy and practice regarding RSE at Hitherfield lies with the Headteacher in partnership with the governing body. We recognise the importance of parents and carers in delivering RSE understanding to children. At least one representative of the governing body will be part of a working group that works with the Headteacher to consult annually with the parent and carer community to regularly review and update Hitherfield's RSE policy.

The RSE programme content is led by the PSHE subject leader and informed by the guidance, resources and information provided by The PSHE Association. RSE will be taught by children's individual class teachers who will be supported by the PSHE subject leader on best practice in teaching PSHE, including Safe and Effective Practice (see below) and receive annual support in how to deliver effective RSE teaching.

## **Legislation (statutory regulations and guidance)**

Current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education (for the school year 2023/24) state that Relationships Education is statutory in all primary schools. To reflect this at Hitherfield, we have developed our own curriculum based on the Thematic Overview of The PSHE Association which includes all elements of the new statutory guidance for Relationships Education. At Hitherfield, the focus for RSE is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive respectful relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. In addition, all primary schools must follow the Department for Education's statutory guidance on nurturing children's physical health and mental wellbeing by preparing them for the physical and emotional changes of puberty before they experience them. For this reason, we start teaching about puberty in Year 4.

The Department for Education recommends that all primary schools have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of their pupils. It is worth noting that the Human Life Cycle remains part of the Life Processes element of the statutory science curriculum and this includes learning about Human Conception and Birth in Year 6. The parental right to withdraw pupils from sex education in primary education remains and relates to aspects of sex education that go beyond the statutory Science or Relationships curriculum. At Hitherfield, as we do not have any lessons beyond this statutory learning, withdrawing children from lessons is not an option.

As part of the RSE programme, we introduce children early on to the concept of body privacy, respect and consent. Although the priority and the majority of content at Hitherfield is Relationships, in order to safeguard all pupils effectively, we believe that Hitherfield should use the term Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), rather than Relationships Education, to reflect this best practice approach.

## **Curriculum design**

Teachers in the Early Years will continue to deliver their relationships education through the Early Years and Foundation Stage; Personal, Social and Emotional Development, Making Relationships which focuses on enabling children opportunities to play cooperatively in groups with their peers.

In Key Stages 1 and 2 (Years 1-6), our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE education provision and will be delivered through Relationships and Health and Wellbeing lessons. We will ensure RSE is matched to the needs of our pupils by beginning each unit of learning with a pre-assessment of children's existing knowledge. RSE will then be taught through a range of teaching methods and interactive activities, including circle time discussion, sorting tasks and small group/paired or individual tasks. High quality resources, approved by The PSHE Association, will support our RSE provision and will be regularly reviewed and updated. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own RSE learning by privately presenting (in words and/or pictures) their new understanding at the end of each unit which will allow teachers to assess individual levels of progress.

The progression framework for the PSHE curriculum can be accessed here [PSHE Overview and Progression Framework 2324](#) and core elements for each Year Group's RSE teaching can be viewed here [Autumn 2 RSE teaching](#). Information regarding the statutory teaching of the human life cycle and human reproduction can be viewed here [Science Progression Framework 2324](#).

## **Safe and Effective practice**

In accordance with guidelines from The PSHE Association, Teachers and pupils will discuss and

agree ground rules before the start of every RSE lesson. These include elements such as respectful listening, no unkind pointing/laughter and no use of real names. Distancing techniques such as no names are used because they allow children to explore an issue objectively without it being about them and their own lives. Sensitive issues will be handled carefully with adaptive teaching practice (pre-teaching/individual teaching) for vulnerable children. Care will be taken to support key vocabulary and concepts with visuals and over-teaching so that children with SEND or who are NTE can access and benefit from this learning. Lessons will be age appropriate and no knowledge from older years will be presented to younger years. During lessons, pupils will be able to ask questions, which will be answered factually in an age-appropriate manner as long as these answers fit into the age-appropriate content. Each pupil's privacy will be respected, and no one will be asked to reveal personal information. All staff teaching RSE will be supported by clear curriculum and guidance and on-going support to ensure only age appropriate knowledge is provided within each year group.

### **Safeguarding**

Teachers are aware that effective RSE teaching, 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 be informed by our Safeguarding Policy on how to respond to any disclosures that may arise. As soon as possible, they should consult with the designated safeguarding lead and record their concerns on CPOMS. If visitors or external agencies are supporting the delivering of any element of RSE, the children's class teacher must be present throughout the duration of their interaction with the children to ensure this response is still provided.

### **Engaging stakeholders**

Hitherfield recognises the important part parents and carers play in their child's understanding of respectful relationships and in discussions around puberty and body changes. This RSE Policy will be available to parents on our website and signposted in our annual letters about RSE, which ensure that parents are fully aware of what is being taught, when and why. We make it clear that they have the right to withdraw only from non-statutory content and invite them to contact us for further information or to view resources. Pupil voice – accessed annually via School Council meetings - will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme.

### **Monitoring, reporting and evaluation**

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSE through annual RSE CPD staff meetings. Pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning at the start of, during and at the end of each RSE unit. Pupil voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities so they most suit each individual class.

### **RSE Policy Review Date**

As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy should be reviewed at least every 18 months - 2 years to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with current Department for Education advice and guidance.

### **External Documents that inform Hitherfield's RSE policy include:**

- DfE statutory guidance on SRE: Sex and Relationships Guidance, DfE July 2000\*
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)
- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)

- Equality Act (2010),
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory
- safeguarding guidance (2016 and 2023)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

**Internal Documents that inform Hitherfield's RSE Policy include:**

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality Objectives

