

Applecroft School



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

Person Responsible:	PSHE Leader
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Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

1) Introduction:

Vision School:

'To create a positive and inspiring community that nurtures each individual and empowers leaders for life'.

School Mission Statement:

'Nurturing Potential, Inspiring Minds, Changing Lives'

School Values:

- Ambition and Leadership
- Kindness and Supportiveness
- Respect and Honesty
- Determination and Resilience

2) Statutory Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education:

All schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2025, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, made Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. They made Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools.

In the foreword of the 2025 DfE guidance document the Secretary of State for Education said:

"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.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education.

The depth and breadth of views is clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and have told us that they see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We agree with this principle and congratulate the many schools delivering outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of their pupils. We are determined that the subjects must be deliverable and give schools flexibility to shape their curriculum according to the needs of their pupils and communities.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.

This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. We have endeavoured to ensure the content is proportionate and deliverable. Whilst we are not mandating content on financial education or careers, we want to support the high quality teaching of these areas in all schools as part of a comprehensive programme, which complements the national curriculum where appropriate and meets the ambitions of the Careers Strategy. We know that many schools will choose to teach the compulsory content within a wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education or similar. Schools are encouraged to continue to do so, if this is right for them, and build on established, high quality programmes.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society."

On page 32 of the same guidance it states that:

"Schools have significant freedom to implement this guidance in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective, high-quality teaching will break down core knowledge and skills into manageable and well-sequenced units, including opportunities for pupils to practise skills so that they will be confident to use them in real-life situations. The curriculum should build knowledge and skills sequentially, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress".

At Applecroft School, we include the statutory Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education within our whole school PSHE curriculum for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and PSED for EYFS. To ensure clear progression across the key stages we use a scheme of work from EC Publishing for Reception to Year 6 and tailor this curriculum to our school's needs as well as individuals within each class. For Nursery we have mapped the PSED objectives across the year.

Our curriculum long term plan can be found on our school website [here](#).

3) What does the DfE statutory guidance on Relationships Education expect children to know by the time they leave primary school?

Relationships Education in primary schools will be delivered through the following themes:

- Living in the wider World
- Relationships Education
- Health and Wellbeing

From Reception onwards, we deliver PSHE through the 'EC Publishing' scheme. EC Publishing have created a spiral approach to teaching statutory content, ensuring that key themes such as relationships, diversity, health, and safety are revisited and deepened through age-appropriate lessons across the year. This structure enables pupils to build knowledge and skills progressively and confidently, in line with statutory RSHE guidance.

4) What does the DfE statutory guidance on Health Education expect children to know by the time they leave primary school?

Health Education in primary schools will be delivered through the following themes:

- Mental wellbeing
- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid

- Developing bodies

Teaching children about puberty is a statutory requirement which sits within the Health Education part of the DfE guidance under '~~Changing adolescent body~~' 'Developing bodies' strand, and at Applecroft we teach this in the summer term in Reception and years 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6.

5) Sex Education:

The DfE Guidance 2025 (p.12) states "Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but we recommend that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science. The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Schools may also cover human reproduction in the science curriculum, but where they do so, this should be in line with the factual description of conception in the science curriculum."

At Applecroft School, we believe children should understand the facts about human reproduction before they leave primary school. We define Sex Education as understanding human reproduction and we teach this as part of PSHE.

Puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education through the 'Health and Wellbeing' strand of EC Publishing.

6) Parents' right to request their child be excused from Sex Education:

The DfE Guidance 2025 (p.7) states that "Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.."

We conclude that sex education refers to human reproduction, and therefore inform parents of their right to request their child be withdrawn from the PSHE lessons that explicitly teach this in Year 6.

Year 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe what happens during the menstrual cycle• describe how changes in puberty differ from person to person
	<p>Parental right to withdraw:</p> <p>Conception/Human Reproduction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• describe how human reproduction happens and how a baby starts to be created• Identify the names of the male and female sex cells and their role in creating a new human life.• Identify some of the different ways loving couples may decide to have children (e.g., natural conception, IVF, and adoption).

The school will inform parents of this right at the beginning of the term Sex Education will be

taught.

However, the teaching of reproduction in a mammal that is covered by the Science curriculum is statutory - parents cannot withdraw children from Science.

7) Monitoring and Review:

The Curriculum Committee of the Governing Board monitors this policy on an annual basis. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full Governing Board as necessary if the policy needs modification. The Curriculum Committee gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the RSHE programme. The effectiveness of RSE will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and PSHE Leader(s) through:

- Learning Walks
- Work scrutiny
- Feedback from pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Observations
- Planning Scrutiny

8) Equality:

The DfE Guidance 2025 (p.37) states, "Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149), when teaching RSHE. Schools must ensure topics in RSHE are taught in a way which does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment. Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics by the end of their secondary education. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex."

At Applecroft School we promote respect for all and value every individual. We respect the right of our children, their families and our staff, to hold beliefs, religious or otherwise, and understand that sometimes these may be in tension with our approach to some aspects of Relationships, Health and Sex Education.

9) Inclusion:

To ensure that pupils make worthwhile progress in lessons, teachers use a range of teaching styles in each lesson in order to match the range of learning styles represented in a typical class. All pupils cover the same core objectives. Teachers provide suitable ways for pupils of different abilities to access the lessons by increasing the degree of support, by using relevant resources, or by the use of other adults.

10) Dealing with Sensitive Issues:

We will continue to answer children's questions, as they arise, in an appropriate manner. There may be occasions when a teacher will respond to a question on a one-to-one basis, or when children are referred to their parents for further information or discussion. Due to the sensitive content, RSE lessons will be delivered to the children by their class teacher where possible.

11) Child Protection and Confidentiality:

Teachers are clear about their legal and professional roles regarding confidentiality. Children are told that teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and also that if confidentiality had to be broken, they will be informed first and supported appropriately. If a teacher is concerned about possible sexual abuse or the sexual activities of a child, the schools' child protection procedures will be followed.

Staff who teach RSE are expected to:

- Provide RSE in accordance with this policy and in a way which encourages pupils to consider morals and the value of family life
- Participate in training to provide Sex Education in line with the school curriculum policy
- Implement the agreed scheme of work
- Draw to the attention of the Headteacher any materials which they consider to be inappropriate
- Respond appropriately to those pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from Sex Education

This statement will be reviewed in line with the school's policy review programme. A record will be kept of children withdrawn from lessons and of any parental complaints or issues raised.

Relationships Education in Primary schools - DfE Guidance 2025

The focus for primary relationships education should be on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

The guidance states that, by the end of primary school:

	Pupils should know:	How we teach this through EC Publishing:
Families and people who care for me	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability. 2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as 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. 3. That the families of other children, 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. 4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up. 5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. 6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Families and people who care for us ● Respectful relationships ● Mental well-being ● How to stay safe (both physically and emotionally)

<p>Caring Friendships</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. 2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships. 3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it. 4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties. 5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened. 6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right. 7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring friendships • Respectful relationships • Online safety and relationships • Mental well-being
<p>Respectful, kind relationships</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated. 2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults. 3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration. 4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs. 5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs. 6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families and people who care for us • Caring friendships • Respectful relationships • Online safety and relationships • Mental well-being • How to stay safe (both physically and emotionally)

	<p>to improve or support their relationships.</p> <p>7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.</p> <p>8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.</p> <p>9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.</p> <p>10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.</p> <p>11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.</p>	
<p>One safety and awareness</p>	<p>1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.</p> <p>2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.</p> <p>3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.</p> <p>4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.</p> <p>5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.</p> <p>6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Respectful relationships ● Online safety and relationships ● Mental well-being ● How to stay safe (both physically and emotionally)

	<p>children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.</p>	
<p>Being Safe</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc. 2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. 3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact. 4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know. 5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust. 6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. 7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Caring friendships ● Respectful relationships ● Online safety and relationships ● Mental well-being ● How to stay safe (both physically and emotionally)

Health Education (in relation to puberty)

	Pupils should know:	How we teach this through EC Publishing:
Developing Bodies	<p>1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.</p> <p>2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.</p> <p>3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical Health: The importance of exercise, healthy eating, and sleep. • Mental Health: Recognising and talking about emotions, and strategies for building resilience. • Puberty and the Changing Adolescent Body: Taught in Years 4 to 6, preparing pupils for the physical and emotional changes during adolescence.

Sex Education from EC Publishing

Year 6

	Pupils should know:	How we teach this through EC Publishing:
Sex Education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the names of the male and female sex cells and their role in creating a new human life. 2. Identify some of the different ways loving couples may decide to have children (e.g., natural conception, IVF, and adoption). 3. Describe how human reproduction happens and how a baby starts to be created 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 6 A lesson on sexual intercourse and conception, separate from the Science curriculum.