ERESBY SCHOOL

POLICY FOR
RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)
Updated January 2025

Introduction

Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education is a school subject through which pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to manage their lives, now and in the future. It helps children and young people to stay healthy and safe, while preparing them to make the most of life and work. When taught well, PSHE education also helps pupils to achieve their academic potential.

PSHE education became statutory for all schools from September 2020 under the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This includes **Relationships Education at key stages 1 and 2, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at key stages 3 and 4,** and Health Education in both primary and secondary phases.

The Department for Education published Statutory Guidance for **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** and Health Education in June 2019. This sets out what schools must cover from September 2020 (though not all they should cover as part of broader PSHE education).

The updated edition of the PSHE Association Programme of Study for PSHE education will support schools to provide a comprehensive programme that integrates, but is not limited to, this statutory content. A broader PSHE programme should also cover economic wellbeing, careers and enterprise education. As well as this, education for personal safety, including assessing and managing risk, is covered and students may not be withdrawn from these sessions.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools (except independent schools).

Eresby School caters for 102 students between the ages of 2 and 19 with moderate to severe and profound learning difficulties and complex needs. We are situated small rural town school which serves the East Coast catchment area of Lincolnshire. The religious emphasis is predominantly Christian.
As a special school there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of our pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching, for these subjects we will ensure that they are taught sensitively in a way that is age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

1. **What is RSE?**

RS(H)E is organised into 3 areas:

- **Relationships Education**
- **Relationships and Sex Education**
- **Health Education**

1.1 At primary school level RSE should contribute to the foundation of PSHE and Citizenship by ensuring that all children: develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships; are able to name parts of the body with appropriate scientific names for external genitalia as well describing how their bodies work; can protect themselves and ask for help and support; are prepared for puberty. In early years the focus will be about an understanding of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour including touch and consent. The school will agree on a common language and share with parents and pupils to ensure safeguarding issues are not missed.

1.2 RSE will be delivered by the class teacher on a rolling programme as per the PSHE scheme of work and topics will be repeated in a developmental programme to enable children to build on prior learning.

1.3 For details of the specific RSE content (what will be taught and at what age) see the PSHE / science schemes of work which are accessible on the school website.

1 Outline of the Curriculum

STRANDS

Primary	Secondary
Families and close positive relationships	Positive relationships
Self-Awareness;	Changing and Growing
Changing and Growing (including puberty).	Relationship values Forming and maintaining respectful relationships
Friendships	Managing Feelings
Managing Feelings Managing hurtful behaviour and bullying	Consent Self-Care, Support and Safety;
Safe relationships	Contraception and parenthood
Self-Care, Support and Safety	Bullying, abuse and discrimination
Respecting self and others	Social influence

2. Aims

2.1 At Eresby School we believe that an effective RSE curriculum needs to be tailored to our student's individual needs. Therefore, it is essential for teachers to personalise their lessons and staff to revisit the curriculum often in order to support our young people for their futures, helping them make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. We will continue to deliver this as part of our PSHE curriculum with cross curricular links with subjects such as Citizenship, Science and Skills for Independent Living.

2.2 High quality, evidence-based, age-appropriate and individualised teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society. The duties on schools in this area are set out in legislation.

2.3 To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

2.4 It is essential in a digital society that schools should be aware that for many young people the distinction between the online world and other aspects of life is less marked than for some adults. Young people often operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age some are likely to be spending a substantial amount of time online. Topics and issues outlined in our programme of study are likely to be encountered by pupils online, our school will take this into account when planning how to support them in distinguishing between different types of online content and making well-founded decisions.

2.5 This policy reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole teaching staff. It was agreed by the governing body at the meeting held in the Autumn term of 2021.

2.6 The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all members of staff and should be incorporated into the planning of all key stages including the Foundation Stage (EYFS). It will be overseen by the Headteacher and the Identified Teacher for PSHE.

3. HOW THE POLICY WAS FORMULATED

This policy was informed by reference to:
- Department for Education Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education document 2019
- The national body for Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme of study for PSHE Education.

It was formulated by the Identified Teacher for RSE in consultation with the Headteacher and staff and reviewed by the governing body (including parent governors). Policies are available for inspection by any parent/ carer at all times on the school website or by requesting a copy.

4. Organisation of RSE

4.1 It is the duty of all staff at Eresby School to support the delivery of the RSE curriculum to promote student well-being and provide pastoral support. Effective RSE is best achieved through a whole-school approach with a focus on delivering lessons which are appropriately set for the age, maturity and understanding of our pupils. Parents / carers are involved, staff are given appropriate training and support when required and all pupils' views are listened to. All staff will be supported by the lead teacher for RSE.

4.2 In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, as a school it is our duty to ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect; this includes providing resources that promote these qualities (i.e. addressing issues such as sexism or ableism) We must also ensure that we comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

4.3 All teaching should be sensitive and age appropriate but also appropriate to the emotional needs and understanding of our students in its approach and content. At the point at which we consider it appropriate to teach pupils about LGBTQIA+, we will endeavour to ensure that this content is fully integrated into our programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.

4.4 RSHE is an inclusive subject, which prepares pupils for the diverse world in which they are growing up. Our resources will be checked to ensure they remain relevant and diverse.

5. Progression, Continuity and Delivery.

5.1 The teaching of RSE will be individualised to meet the needs of our students and give them the information they need to support them in their daily lives and life beyond education.

5.2 As society becomes every increasingly digitalised it is important that our curriculum supports students in their ability to distinguish between the online world and other aspects of life. Many of our students operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age some are likely to be spending a substantial amount of time online. We will therefore aim to keep up to date with online activities and issues raised in the media etc. and use this to adapt and again, personalise our teaching/curriculum. Links with the RSE and PSHE curriculum will be made in line with the E-Safety and ICT curriculum.

5.3 The RSE curriculum will need to be reviewed regularly to reflect how students are interacting online and in discussion with issues that parents may also raise. We will support our students to distinguish between different types of online content and making well-founded decisions, how to react to situations (like trolling, phishing etc.) and understand the positive and negative impact of social media including issues like sexting, pornography and grooming. Students will need support to understand what is meant by extreme views. They should also be aware that certain websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising). In addition, criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society.

5.4 RSE will be delivered through PSHE and science lessons, as well as when pupils indicate (possibly through a displayed behaviour) the need for specific teaching according to their needs (This may take the form of an intervention e.g. a social story or Friends Resilience course). See appendix a and b for specifics.

5.5 Teaching methods will be whole class, mixed gender as well as small groups. Teaching strategies will include: establishing ground rules with pupils; using "distancing" techniques (e.g. depersonalizing discussions i.e. through role play / use of videos / theatre groups); knowing how to deal with unexpected questions or comments from pupils; using discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials; encouraging reflection.

5.6 Staff will be supported, through training sessions, discussion and opportunities through CPD on how to effectively teach RSE and answer sensitive questions. Where a member of staff is unsure or uncomfortable about answering questions then the RSE lead will support and where necessary we will include agencies to support such as Healthy Minds and LLC such as the Stay Safe Partnership and My Happy Mind. We will always try to answer questions with honesty and at a level appropriate to the student so as not to cause confusion or anxiety.

5.7 Materials used in schools for the RSE will be in accordance with the PSHE framework and the law. The school will ensure that pupils are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and cultural background of all pupils. Resources will be reflective of inclusivity and equality and be more reflective of modern life.

5.7.1 Teachers have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils; the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE within the PSHE framework.

6. MORAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

6.1 RSE should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils and to prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

6.2 Pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of stable and loving relationships, what a positive and safe relationship looks like, marriage/civil partnerships, combatting stereotypes and accessing advice and support regarding relationships including physical aspects (where appropriate to the student) *resources should support this and promote inclusivity in all forms.*

6.3 Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them, e.g. looked after children or young carers.

a. The views and religious convictions of all pupils and their parents / carers should be respected and schools are expected to plan based on the religious makeup of our students. Parents will be informed, and conversation engaged where appropriate and prior to teaching topics which may be affected by religious perspectives.
b. Staff have a responsibility for protecting students from FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) and are made aware of those students at risk and signs to look out for.

7. SPECIFIC ISSUES STATEMENTS

7.1 It is important that RSHE is taught through shared responsibility; parents are the key to its success as they understand the individual needs of their child. Parents will be informed before RSE lessons take place in order to prepare the student and then follow up where needed will also be encouraged to help support our students to fully understand and practice the content.

7.2 All parents / carers will be encouraged to see materials and resources that will be used in delivering RSE, especially before the transition year and have the opportunity to discuss the detailed content of what will be taught.

8. Confidentiality and Child Protection.

8.1 The school will have a clear and explicit confidentiality policy – teachers cannot offer or guarantee pupils unconditional confidentiality and teachers are not legally bound to inform parents or the head teacher of any disclosure unless the head teacher has specifically requested them to do so, this is inline with our safeguarding policy.

8.2 If abuse is suspected, teachers should follow the school's child protection procedures and links with other policies such as anti-bullying and equal opportunities.

8.3 Delivery of RSE is not the sole responsibility of schools. Parents and members of the wider community have much to offer. The school will work effectively in partnership with parents and others in the wider community. Health professionals, social workers, youth workers, peer educators and visitors all have a part to play in delivering RSE and will abide by the school's policy.

8.4 **Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.** Any such request should be directed to the head teacher to discuss with parents and, as appropriate, with the child to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. Schools will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

8.5 Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school should respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

8.6 This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

8.7 If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is our responsibility as a school to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. **There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.**

9. RESOURCES

9.1 Resources used for RSE as part of the PSHE / Citizenship curriculum will be those as advised by SLT/PSHE coordinator and approved training providers such as The PSHE association, Lincolnshire County Council And Chailey Heritage Foundation (Sex Factor training). This ensures they have been selected and checked for stereotyping, bias and prejudice.

9.2 Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people.

9.3 As with any visitor, as a school we are responsible for ensuring appropriate checks are in place for the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials. It is important that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and published policy. It is important that we discuss the details of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils. Where possible we should ask to see the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan in advance, so that we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs. It is important to agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy.

10. Right to withdraw:

10.1 As a parent you only have the right to withdraw your child from the **sex education** element of RSHE in primary and secondary. Puberty is now part of health education and a child **cannot be withdrawn** from this.

10.2 Relationships and reproduction also form part of the science curriculum and these are compulsory. In primary, as a school, we will decide what elements of sex education are suitable to the needs of our students and adapt the curriculum accordingly (*'schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.')*

10.3 We will also consider the views of parents when planning the curriculum but make aware that they do not have the right to veto the decision made by the school.

10.4 If you wish to withdraw your child from sex education you must seek permission from the head teacher who may wish to discuss this further. Only the headteacher can approve the decision to withdraw a student.

10.5 Where pupils are withdrawn from sex education, schools should document the process and will have to 'ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.'

11. Using Supporting Professionals

11.1 Visitors will be briefed in advance so that they understand their involvement along with the time available, equipment, facilities, staffing and students' ability/needs.

11.2 Use of visitors should be to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of the teaching staff, rather than as a replacement for teaching by those staff.

12. Assessment

RSHE is assessed within our PSHE curriculum and targets are set specifically for the topic being taught. As a school we use the B Squared assessment and tracking system. Progress will be reviewed and tracked as part of our school assessment policy. Any issues arising during the school will be shared with parents as appropriate and as part of our safeguarding policy.

Appendix A

Responses to touching of genitals and male/ female masturbation

At Eresby school we are fully aware that as our young people change and grow, so should our curriculum to reflect the help and support required to tackle sensitive and spontaneous issues. Curiosity in one's own body is part of normal development as is the touching of genitalia and masturbation, which are part of natural sexual behaviour.

For many of our young people touching their genitalia can be a way of exploring their body, gaining sensory stimulation or enjoyment. This may occur as a response to many different sensory stimuli, meaning they may not fully understand what is happening. Some young people may not intuitively understand the rules of society and their understanding of what behaviour is acceptable; they may need instruction and support. It is important for young people to learn these social rules as behaving inappropriately in public situations can put them at risk and increases their vulnerability. As a staff we will work to reassure young people that for many it is a natural part of sexual fulfilment and will not impose individual views regarding this behaviour. Although this can be challenging, we feel that it essential to work with a young person if such behaviours become apparent. Therefore, staff will use established methods for the monitoring and assessing of the student's behaviour and liaise with the RSE and Safeguarding leads to work on a behaviour plan to suit the student and their environment. Parents will also be involved in this process.

The overall aim in relation to masturbation and genital touching will be to support our young people to learn about the concept of public and private, we will deliver a consistent message in relation to the subject matter. It is important that we all reinforce the fact that there are no 'private' spaces within the school environment. The style of approach will vary according to the young person's age and stage of development and level of understanding.

Home – school liaison will take place to develop an agreed action plan. All staff will be consistent in their approach and in the use of any agreed action plans which may include:

- Distraction
- Social Stories to re-enforce public/private and reinforce there are no 'private' spaces within school environment
- Using symbols / flashcards e.g. outlining unacceptable behaviour within the classroom
- Not drawing too much attention to prevent inadvertent behaviour reinforcement
- Use of positive reinforcement and where appropriate referrals for specialist help
- Home – School Liaison will be set up in response to masturbation or persistent genital touching when behaviours become apparent.

We hope to ensure that there is support for parents/ carers, other family members and school staff in managing incidents both in and out of school. As part of the liaison process an agreed action plan may be developed if this is felt necessary both home and school, with the aim of establishing a consistent approach.

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Appendix b

Child on Child Abuse

Abuse as defined by RSCP (Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership)

Child on child abuse occurs when a young person is exploited, bullied and / or harmed by their peers who are the same or similar age; everyone directly involved in peer- on- peer abuse is under the age of 18 (our students are up to 19). 'Peer-on-peer' abuse can relate to various forms of abuse (not just sexual abuse and exploitation), and crucially it does not capture the fact that the behaviour in question is harmful to the child perpetrator as well as the victim

After extensive discussion about this issue as a teaching team we have agreed:

We will not tolerate any form of abuse.

However, in a setting such as The Eresby School, abuse in this context is likely to be as a result of a student's learning needs; sensory or behavioral. This is often combined with a lack of understanding of social cues. It is important to understand that our pupils are supervised and monitored throughout the school day thus reducing the likelihood of peer-on-peer abuse occurring. Our students learn through behaviours being addressed early on, good behaviour being modelled and use of social stories where interventions are needed. These are repeated over a period of time to support a student's understanding and further monitoring is put in place to protect all the students involved or at risk.

Staff are well informed, trained and vigilant to behaviours that are deemed inappropriate and will use methods suited to the students involved.
Please refer to our child on child abuse appendix within our trust safeguarding policy.

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