

Relationships and sex education policy



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Date of latest review	September 2021
Regularity of review	Every year

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- › Help children to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy and to have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others
- › Develop confidence to talk about feelings and relationships
- › Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- › Support parents and carers in preparing pupils for puberty, and understanding the importance of health and hygiene
- › Help children to be able to recognise unsafe situations and when to ask for help and support in order to protect themselves
- › Create a positive culture around issues of relationships
- › Teach pupils how to use appropriate vocabulary and understand that offence can be caused by use of sexual terms as an insult.

2. Statutory requirements

As a primary school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of learning about reproduction.

At Dame Catherine Harpur's School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. The headteacher pulls together all relevant information including relevant national guidance and has an initial discussion with our SMT (governance group.)
2. Staff consultation – all school staff are given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Family consultation – groups of parents and children are invited to review and make comments on the policy, with the aim of discussing what families at Dame Catherine’s need from RSE
4. Ratification – following any amendments resulting from consultation or changes in guidance, the policy is shared with governors and ratified

4. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

At Dame Catherine’s, we pride ourselves in knowing our children and families well. We respect that children are individuals and that there should not be a ‘one size fits all’ approach to learning – this includes how children learn about relationships. Our groups are very small and we will consider how we teach about relationships in a bespoke way, according to the groups of children, and ages of the children, we have on roll at any given point. We will have individual conversations with parents or carers, for example during parent – teacher meetings, to ensure that we are aware of what the children already know, and discuss with parents / carers, the best approaches for their children. In this way, we can take account of their age, but also their maturity, needs and feelings.

Our curriculum outline is set out as per Appendix 1. Given that we tailor our curriculum closely to the needs of individuals and groups of children, the specific elements will be built into the curriculum for children when it is most appropriate to do so and discussed with parents or carers in advance. Content will either be shared through our curriculum overviews or through additional specially planned ‘off piste’ sessions.

Primary sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, and additional content on sex education is not part of our curriculum at Dame Catherine’s.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE related topics are mainly taught within our wider curriculum including through personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

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

› Being safe

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing body

The governing body is responsible for approving this policy.

7.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 8).

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- › Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- › Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- › Monitoring progress
- › Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- › Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

Class teachers are responsible for teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

7.4 Pupils

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

8. Parents' right to withdraw

At Dame Catherine's we recognise that parents have a right to withdraw their children from non-statutory components of sex education within RSE. Dame Catherine's will not include non-statutory components of sex education within their RSE curriculum. It is a statutory requirement that parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education. Parents can however be reassured that our school has the flexibility to develop our program so that it is tailored to the individual needs of children and we will do this in discussion and collaboration with parents and carers.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher might also invite visitors from outside the school, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE, and will inform parents in advance of any sessions.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the headteacher and governors linked with teaching and learning through review meetings and discussions with children.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher every 2 years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

Appendix 1: Curriculum coverage

TOPIC	KNOWLEDGE
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, 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 • That others' families, 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 • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	KNOWLEDGE
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

