



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Amended / Reviewed by: Governing Body School Development Committee

Date adopted by Full Governing Body: March 2021

**Signed: Sarah McLay
Headteacher**

**Phil Di Leo
Chair of Governors**

Next review date: March 2020

1. Introduction and Aims

The aims of relationship and sex education (RSE) at Vale School are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of their bodies' development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

Vale School's RSE policy supports the school's fundamental vision, "striving to be the best we can be." The policy promotes the importance of recognising the unique qualities that all our students have. At Vale School RSE and closely linked PSHE teaching, concentrates on ensuring our students develop the self-respect and the self-confidence to navigate the world as independently and safely as possible.

In order to support our pupils fully, PSHE and RSE teaching is appropriately differentiated and staff give plenty of opportunity to build strong and respectful relationships in school. Staff will tailor learning to the appropriate developmental stage of the students and use their considerable knowledge of the students to make sure that they are able to access the RSE learning at a suitable level.

2. Statutory Requirements

Primary Statutory Requirements

As a maintained primary school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

However, we are not required to provide sex education but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum (where appropriate.)

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Secondary Statutory Requirements

As a maintained secondary school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per the Children and Social work act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

At Vale School we teach RSE as set out in this policy, whilst being mindful that this education must be accessible to all our students. As specified in the DfE Statutory Guidance (2019), Vale School will ensure

that “teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.”

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:

- Review – a member of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- Pupil consultation – in a sensitive and appropriate manner, we investigated how pupils felt about RSE provision in the school and what they wanted from their RSE education.
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

4. Definition

RSE should strive to equip students with the tools to be happy, healthy and safe.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, 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

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of pupils. The curriculum is specifically designed in order to be accessible to our students. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Vale School curriculum has three strands:

- Sensory
- Emergent
- Formal

For pupils following the **sensory** curriculum we teach RSE as part of the programme of study for Social and Emotional Development. Pupils learn about:

- Self-awareness and self-confidence (making choices)
- Relationships with other people (being together, interacting)
- Developing independence (choice making, personal care, eating, knowing yourself)
- Understanding their bodies (recognising comfort and discomfort)
- Keeping Safe (Their private space and places)
- Keeping safe (People who care for me)
- Behaviour (telling someone what you need and want)

For those pupils following the **emergent** curriculum, we teach RSE as part of PSHE, Independence and Science. They learn about:

- Body parts and bodily changes
- Privacy and self-respect
- Making positive choices

- Feelings and emotions
- Keeping themselves safe including online safety

Pupils following the **formal** curriculum learn about all the areas we cover at earlier stages of study. They follow the programmes of study for PSHE and Science that are part of the National curriculum.

During Key Stage 4 pupils follow a programme personalised by the school's focus group on RSE that covers the following areas:

- Body parts
- Puberty
- Relationships
- Sex and sexuality
- Safe sex and contraception
- Sexual health
- Feelings and emotions
- Online safety

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. At Vale Primary and Secondary, PSHE is interwoven into a topic-based curriculum that teaches a wide breadth of appropriate knowledge and skills for our cohort.

Vale School has a primary and a secondary site as well as an inclusion scheme at Belmont Infants and Belmont Juniors schools. Students who attend the Vale inclusion scheme at Belmont School will follow the Belmont RSE curriculum for the majority of the time, with appropriate differentiation by Vale staff, where necessary. More information about the Belmont curriculum can be found on the Belmont Schools' websites. Students who are fully or mostly included into mainstream lessons at Duke's Aldridge Academy (Vale Secondary's mainstream partner school), may also follow the Duke's Aldridge Academy programme for PSHE and RSE. More details of this curriculum can be found on the Duke's Aldridge Academy website.

All classes have RSE embedded in their learning throughout the year and strands of RSE are taught within other subject areas. For example, in a literacy lesson there might be a story about bullying and in a sensory story, pupils might be learning to work as a group. RSE runs through everything that we do, when we celebrate achievement or when we guide pupils on the way to behave in a group.

RSE lessons are planned in line with the curriculum offer at Vale School. We may invite other appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable professionals to support the teaching of RSE, for example speech and language therapists, sexual health professionals and the school nurse. Teachers select appropriate resources which may include BBC educational videos, products around teen issues, stories, models, photographs and family planning leaflets.

Pupils are encouraged to handle and talk about real objects, for example when learning about personal hygiene they will use deodorant, shaving cream etc., when learning about puberty pupils will talk about sanitary towels, learn about safe sex and contraception.

Primary Delivery of RSE

Relationship 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

Secondary Delivery of RSE

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

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 (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

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 the 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.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

The RSE lead and curriculum co-ordinator across all the Vale sites is Catherine Williams. Individual class teachers are responsible for adapting the RSE curriculum for the needs and abilities of the students in their class.

7.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Staff will always consider pupils' needs and abilities when tailoring the RSE curriculum to their class. Students will not be expected to engage with material that is too complex or sophisticated for them from a developmental standpoint.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Primary School

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Secondary School

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

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 and PSHE lead will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Parental Support

If at any time a parent feels that their child may need extra support in regards to RSE, for example the child may be asking specific questions that the parent finds difficult to answer or the child is displaying a behaviour that needs to be discussed as a team. We would always provide support for parents through meetings and discussions to address the issues. The parent should first contact the class teacher in this eventuality.

11. Safeguarding

We recognise that our pupils may be at extra risk because of their special educational needs. We believe that by teaching them to communicate using correct terminology, to make positive relationships in school, to manage their behaviour and to learn about themselves, we are helping to keep them safe.

We train all staff on safeguarding when they join the school and arrange refresher sessions every year. We give all staff clear guidance regarding supporting pupils with challenging behaviour. The school's safeguarding policy is made available for all school staff and parents on the school website.

12. Monitoring Arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Catherine Williams, the lead teacher for PSHE through:

- Oversight of planning by class teachers.
- Learning walks of PSHE and RSE teaching

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Catherine Williams, the PSHE curriculum lead, annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.

Appendix 1: By the end of primary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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
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

<p>Online relationships</p>	<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
<p>Being safe</p>	<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

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● That there are different types of committed, stable relationships ● How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children ● What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony ● Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into ● The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships ● The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting ● How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship ● Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships ● How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) ● 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs ● About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help ● That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control ● What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable ● The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online ● About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online ● Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online ● The impact of viewing harmful content ● That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners ● That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail ● How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships ● How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship ● That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing ● The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women ● That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others ● That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex ● The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available ● The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage ● That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) ● How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing ● About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment ● How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour ● How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	