



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX **EDUCATION POLICY**

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Birchfield Primary School
POLICY FOR SEX AND RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION (SRE)

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Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) within the Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality
- Help pupils identify and understand positive relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Teach pupils the importance of looking after their mental health and wellbeing
- Teach pupils how to keep themselves and others safe, including the role of the trusted adult

Statutory Requirements

As a primary academy 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 sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At Prince Albert Community Trust we teach RSE in line with the Department of Education's statutory requirements.

Policy Development

This policy has been written as a result of separate consultations with school staff and parents. Due to the Covid-19 crisis, a leaflet explaining RSE was sent to all parents and they were invited to a TEAMS presentation/consultation.

Definition

To understand how the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education are connected in this policy and in the curriculum, it is important to understand how it fits across both Primary and Secondary Education.

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.

It involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

It is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Relationships Education is learning about how to:

- Be appreciative of existing relationships
- To form new healthy relationships
- To enjoy strong positive, non-exploitative, caring relationships online and in person

This will particularly reference family relationships including marriage, friendships and relationships with peers and adults

Sex Education in primary schools is not mandatory; however the National Curriculum for Science in primary school includes content about human body parts, growth, puberty and reproduction.

Parents/guardians do not have the right to withdraw from this aspect of the curriculum

Curriculum and Delivery of RSE

At Birchfield, we recognise the individual needs of our pupils and the diversity of our communities. Through our education and our ethos, we promote our individual school values. These values underpin the work of the individual schools.

In line with government guidance, our curriculum reflects and 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

We teach RSE through our PSHE (Personal, Social, Health & Economic) curriculum. Whilst our PSHE curriculum has been developed to meet government requirements, it has been adapted to meet the requirements of our pupils.

Our PSHE programme covers information about puberty, hygiene and menstruation. If your child has difficulty managing their periods at school please contact a staff member for support.

PSHE is taught weekly and follows the curriculum overview in appendix 2. We may need to adapt the curriculum as and when necessary.

All staff will be mindful of their safeguarding role and will follow the school procedures if a question raises concerns of this nature.

Dealing with Questions

As with any curriculum area, pupils will ask questions during their lessons to further their understanding. Teachers will employ strategies to ensure that questions are asked and answered in a factual, balanced and age-appropriate way.

We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm and exploitation by discussing issues openly within the context of the lesson. During lessons, teachers will attempt to answer all questions asked by pupils, although some questions may not be addressed to the whole class. Some questions that arise during these lessons may relate to sensitive or controversial topics. These may relate to personal experience or involvement by pupils, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. Any questions of this nature will be logged with the DSL.

Teachers will take the following approach to dealing with questions:

- Staff will be respectful of the child's faith background.
- Staff will not give a personal opinion and stay politically neutral.
- Remain calm with a matter of fact approach and voice.
- Be consistent in use of language and key messages.
- Recognise the importance of being age appropriate.
- Focus on answering the question asked.
- Clarify what the pupil is asking if that is not clear, and check that the learner feels that their question has been answered.
- Remind pupils they can ask personal questions after the lesson if that feels more appropriate, or talk to another trusted adult
- Be clear about limits on confidentiality and respect pupil's privacy.
- Take time to give an answer e.g. 'Let me have a think about that and we'll talk about it later'.
- Not discuss the issue using yourself or a member of your family as an example.
- Use distancing techniques e.g. 'This body change happens to most girls when they grow up'.

- Discuss issues with senior leaders if they need support. Discussion with colleagues helps ensure consistent approaches.
- Ensure their response is in line with the school RSE policy.
- Be aware of the safeguarding policy and procedure if the issue raises such concerns.
- Pause and park – teachers might hit the pause button on a particular discussion and park it until a later date – perhaps when they have clarified the position with SLT, checked against the curriculum or spoken to parents
- Any concerns relating to safeguarding or child protection will be referred to a school DSL.

Equality, Inclusion and Support

Relationships education is delivered in line with the [Equalities Act 2010](#) and [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) to ensure those with protected characteristics do not face discrimination.

This area of learning is often taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of pupils 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 pupils may have a different structure of support around them (for example; looked after children or young carers).

In complying with the requirements of the Equality Act, we value diversity, encourage respect for all and promote tolerance for, and celebration of difference. At times, when there is an identified need, we may take positive action through our planning and delivery of RSE to deal with disadvantage facing those with protected characteristics.

RSE will be accessible to all regardless of their gender or background. Through the delivery of RSE, teachers will explore gender stereotypes and how they may limit a person's potential and ensure that people of all genders receive information that is relevant to their needs.

There are many different faith and cultural perspectives on aspects of RSE. We aim to deliver RSE in a factual, nonjudgmental way, ensuring that teachers do not promote one faith or cultural viewpoint, but rather provide a balanced approach that acknowledges the views and opinions of our community.

We will use a range of materials and resources that reflect the diversity of the school population and encourages acceptance and tolerance. We want every pupil and family to feel included, respected and valued.

A range of different families and relationships will be explored within RSE. All pupils, whatever their identity, or family background need to feel that RSE is relevant to them and sensitive to their needs. Resources used will demonstrate awareness of both the school community and wider society where possible.

SEND

Teachers will adapt the lesson as appropriate and use a variety of teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals. For some pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and disabilities, a tailored approach may be necessary to ensure learning outcomes are met.

Our Approach to teaching about puberty:

Pupils are taught about staying healthy and looking after our changing bodies from Reception onwards. Pupils' learn about specific aspects of puberty from the beginning of Year 5 through the units of work 'How will we grow and change?' and in Year 6 'How can we keep healthy as we grow?' These units cover specific learning relating to menstruation and our developing bodies. These lessons fall under health education and parents are not able to withdraw pupils from these lessons. Pupils are taught this content in a mix of whole class and single sex groupings.

Our Approach to LGBT+ Equalities

All schools are required to meet the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010. There has been much misinformation in the media about how LGBT+ issues are to be taught within the Relationships, Health and Sex Education curriculum in primary schools. Although the DfE guidance does not state the age at which children should be taught about lesbian, gay, and bisexuality, it does say that they expect that primary schools should include at least some coverage. The guidance is also clear that content on sexuality should be fully integrated into the programme of study rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. This should ensure that pupils' own life experience is reflected in the teaching they receive.

The inclusion of these details in the guidance should mean that pupils should feel supported and included regardless of their emerging sexuality or family circumstances. As the guidance is not explicit about the age at which children should start to receive this teaching, the DfE state that there is a risk that primary age pupils with LGBT+ parents (or other

close friends or family) or those who are already beginning to understand their own sexuality may feel that relationships education does not address their needs. They may also feel that the teaching is indirectly discriminatory if they attend a primary school that chooses not to include LGB content. We believe that it is important that children with LGBT+ family and friends have access to teaching that reflects their life and personal development. Our curriculum approach is designed to nurture positive and healthy relationships across the school community. Our aim in school is that all children understand what makes a relationship positive and healthy and can recognise and get help if they are experiencing something unhealthy. Our starting point is building a positive, respectful relationship with self, and creating a sense of belonging and inclusion. This work begins in the early years where children learn about friendships and socialising in a positive way with familiar adults and other children.

Our programme does not explicitly teach about heterosexual or LGBT+ relationships in adulthood, other than to explain that any two adults can love each other and be attracted to each other. There is minimal focus on sexual orientation and gender identity in the programme; but enough to enable pupils to understand the meaning of the words they might hear. At no point in this work is there any mention of sexual activity – it is about people and who they love, are attracted to and may want to marry or spend their lives with. This work is about alleviating stereotyping, accepting and respecting all people and celebrating differences of all sorts. We want to show that we value and include all pupils and all family compositions, not to mention all teachers and members of the school community, thus equipping pupils for life in the UK today. Our curriculum is underpinned by the philosophy to value every child as a unique human being, to enable everyone to feel included and to celebrate difference, thus developing empathy, compassion and respect for self and others and as a school, we fully support this philosophy and believe that school is a place where all children should feel safe and respected. We want pupils to leave school understanding there are many differences and similarities between people and that this should be positive rather than a source of negativity or discrimination. Our curriculum talks about children and people as being of equal value, without labels, and considers the qualities most important in human beings. It unpacks stereotypes and influences and helps children become mindful, aware of their thoughts and feelings and the impact these may have.

Our Approach to Teaching about same sex families and relationships

Pupils should be taught that marriage is available to same sex and opposite sex parents. There are many family situations in our school; some children will have parents who are separated, some may live with a mum and a dad, some may have stepparents, some may live in extended multi-generational families, and some may be fostered or adopted. Some may have other family arrangements; and some of those in parenting roles will be heterosexual and some will be LGBT+. We believe that the most important aspect of families is that the adults that our pupils live with, love and care for them. The make-up of our families in terms of their gender identity and sexual orientation is of no relevance at all and we welcome diversity in our community. Our PSHE programme makes every effort to reflect a wide range of families in its images so that all pupils can resonate with their own experience of 'family'. No pupil should ever be made to feel less accepted, or that their family is any less loving and caring than another. Pupils who feel unaccepted or isolated are more vulnerable, possibly feel less secure, and potentially less able to apply themselves to learning. Our PSHE lessons help children explore why a loving and caring family is important and how they contribute to that as members of their own families. We also use books and stories within the context of teaching about diversity on a wider scale, including learning about disabilities, ethnicities and faiths. This is linked to our school values. Throughout the curriculum we look at diverse role models and we challenge stereotypes. As pupils mature, they will be exposed to discussions about the dangers and impact of stereotyping.

All schools have a duty to address bullying, this includes all protected characteristics. With relationships education compulsory in primary schools (unlike sex education), parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons. We are always happy to talk to parents individually.

Roles and responsibilities

The Trust board

The Trust board have delegated the approval of the RSE policy to the Chief Executive Officer.

The head of school

The head of school is responsible for the implementation of RSE and ensuring that it is taught consistently across the school.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Following the planned curriculum
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

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.

Pupils

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

Parents

RSE is a partnership between home and school. We recognise that in RSE, parents and carers play a core role and we therefore welcome their engagement with our curriculum. It is important that RSE delivered within the school is explored in more detail within the context of individual families. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of pupils at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this we:

- Share the curriculum overview and RSE policy on our website
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the RSE of their child
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school

Parents' right to withdraw

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

Parents only have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE. Our current policy is that the school does not currently teach any of the non-statutory components of sex education other than what is currently in the National Curriculum for science

However, any concerns will be listened to, and should be put in writing and addressed to the Head of School.

Training

Staff training is provided in order for staff to deliver RSE effectively

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and middle leaders through; learning walks, pupils conferencing and book scrutiny. Pupil's development in RSE is monitored by class teachers and SLT.

APPENDIX 1

	Pupils should know...	
Families and people who care for 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 (Marriage in England and Wales is available to both opposite sex and same sex couples. The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 extended marriage to same sex couples in England and Wales. The ceremony through which a couple get married may be civil or religious). how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed. 	<p>All of these aspects are covered through PSHE lessons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who is special to us? What is the same and different about us? What are families like? How do we treat each other with respect? How can friends communicate safely? How do friendships change as we grow?
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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes a good friend? Who is special to us? How can we be a good friend? How do we treat each other with respect? How can friends communicate safely? How do friendships change as we grow?
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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What makes a good friend? What is the same and different about us? What is bullying? How can we be a good friend? What keeps us safe? How do we treat each other with respect? How can friends communicate safely? How do friendships change as we grow?

APPENDIX 2

Personal, Social and Health Education: Long Term Overview

Relationships
Health and Well-being
Living in the Wider World

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y 1	What makes a good friend? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to make friends How to behave as a friend How to resolve arguments How to ask for help 	Who is special to us? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different people in my family How we feel special and cared for How families are all different but share common features 	What helps us stay healthy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That things we put into or onto our bodies affect how we feel Medicines Why hygiene is important How to take care of ourselves 	What can we do with money? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What money is and that it comes in different forms How money is obtained How people make choices about what to do with their money The difference between needs and wants 	Who helps to keep us safe? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different people in the community that help them to keep safe Who can help them in different places/situations How to respond safely to adults they don't know The pants rule What to do if they feel unsafe or worried – 999 National water safety week	How can we look after each other and the world? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How kind and unkind behaviour can affect others, how to be polite and courteous About responsibilities How people and animals need to be cared for What can harm the local and global environment
Y 2	What is the same and different about us? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How they are unique How they are similar or different to others Celebrating similarities & differences - disability 	What is bullying? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How words and actions can affect how people feel Name-calling, hurtful teasing, excluding others is unacceptable How to respond and seek help 	What jobs people do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How jobs help people earn money Ranges of jobs people do How people have different strengths and interests Using the internet and digital devices in everyday lives 	What helps us to stay safe? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rules and restriction that help us to stay safe Identifying potentially unsafe situations (including online) Resisting pressure to do something that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable including keeping secrets The pants rule How not everything they see online is true or trustworthy Seeking help 	What helps us to grow and stay healthy? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The different things help our bodies to be healthy The impact of too much sugar The benefits of physical activity and sleep Screen time Keeping safe in the sun National water safety week	How do we recognise our feelings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising, naming and describing a range of feelings How different things/times/experiences can bring about different feelings for different people How feelings affect people in their bodies and their behaviour Managing feelings Seeking help
Y 3	How can we be a good friend? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How friendships support wellbeing How to recognise if someone is feeling excluded or lonely Identifying qualities that lead to good friendships How to manage disputes and arguments Recognising if a friendship is making them feel uncomfortable or unsafe 	What keeps us safe? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising hazards How to keep their body protected – e.g. seatbelts That our bodies belong to us – pants rule Recognising and responding to pressure (including online) Everyday health and hygiene What to do in an emergency National water safety week	What are families like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How families differ from one another (different family structures) Tolerance & understanding Common features of family life (celebrations, holidays) How people within families care for one another Asking for help or advice if relationships are making them feel unhappy or worried 	What makes a community? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How they belong to different groups and communities What is meant by a diverse community – UK/Aston How community helps everyone to feel included and values contributions Being respectful towards people who may live differently to them 	Why should we eat well and look after our teeth? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy diet, nutritionally rich foods Maintaining good oral hygiene Balanced diet Choices and who influences these How to seek advice about healthy eating and dental care 	Why should we keep active and sleep well? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How regular physical activity benefits bodies and feelings Balancing time Making choices Screen time The impact of the lack of sleep Seeking support
Y 4	What Strengths, skills and interests do we have? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising personal qualities and individuality Developing self-worth Setting goals Learning from mistakes and setbacks Reframing unhelpful thinking Determination and resilience Mindset – making mistakes 	How do we treat each other with respect? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How people's behaviour affects themselves and others, including online Rights and responsibilities About the right to privacy, how to recognise when a confidence or secret should be kept The rights children have and why it is important to protect these Discrimination – racism – homophobia - gender Responding to aggressive or inappropriate behaviour 	How can we manage our feelings? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How everyday things can affect feelings How feelings change over time The importance of expressing feelings and how they can be expressed in different ways Responding proportionately to, and manage, feelings in different circumstances Managing feelings at times of loss or grief Exploring 'boys don't cry' Accessing advice / support 	How can we help in an accident or emergency? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to carry out basic first aid That if someone has experienced a head injury they should not be moved Seeking adult help Remaining calm and contacting the emergency services 	What decisions can people make with money? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How people make decisions about spending and saving money How to recognise what makes something 'value for money' That there are risks associated with money – online purchases – in app purchases To recognise the risks involved in gambling related activities, and the impact it might have – also online gaming 	How can we manage risk in different places? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How to recognise, predict, assess and manage risk in different situations How to keep safe in the local environment – (national water safety week – June) How people can be influenced by their peers' behaviour and by a desire for peer approval – how to manage this How to keep safe online – requests for personal information Reporting concerns Rules, restrictions & laws
Y 5	What makes a stereotype and what does it mean to challenge them? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognising & respecting similarities & differences between people That they are a range of factors that contribute to a person's identity Stereotypes and how they are not always accurate and can negatively influence behaviours and attitudes – gender – race – disability Challenging stereotypes 	How can friends communicate safely? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About the different types of relationships they have in their lives How friends and family communicate together, how the internet and social media can be used positively How knowing someone face to face differs from online Recognising risk in relation to friendships Safe content online, safe sharing 	How will we grow and change? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> About puberty and how bodies change during puberty, including menstruation * How puberty can affect emotions and feelings How personal hygiene routines change during puberty How to ask for advice and support 	How can drugs common to everyday life affect health? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How drugs common to everyday life can affect health and well-being (smoking/vaping, alcohol, caffeine and medicines) How laws surrounding the use of drugs exist to protect them That drugs can become a habit which is difficult to break Peer pressure and unsafe situations relating to drugs County lines Asking for help 	How can our choices make a difference to others and the environment? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How people have a shared responsibility to help protect the world around them How everyday choices affect the environment What people choose to buy or spend money on can affect other or the environment (fairtrade) How to carry out personal responsibilities in a caring compassionate way 	What jobs would we like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exploring a broad range of jobs That some jobs are paid and others voluntary Different ways into jobs and careers (college, apprenticeships) About the skills, attributes, qualifications and training needed for different jobs Challenging stereotypes about the types of jobs people can do How they might choose a career when they are older
Y 6	How can we keep healthy as we grow? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How physical and mental health are linked Making healthy choices That habits can be healthy or unhealthy – balanced lifestyles That anyone can experience mental health issues How to recognise early signs of physical or mental ill-health and what to do about this How puberty relates to growing from childhood to adulthood *taught in gender groupings		How can the media influence people? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How the media, including online experiences, can affect people's wellbeing Fake news and discrimination/stereotypes – gender – racism – disability - homophobia That not everything should be shared online or on social media, the rules around this and distributing of images To recognise unsafe or suspicious content How information is ranked, selected, targeted to meet the interests of individuals & groups, & can be used to influence 	What will change as we become more independent? How do friendships change as we grow? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> That people have different kinds of relationships in their lives How growing up and becoming more independent comes with increased opportunities and responsibilities How friendships may change as they grow and managing this Healthy and unhealthy relationships – gang culture – knife crime How to manage change, including moving to secondary school; how to ask for support or where to seek further information about growing up 		