Gillespie Primary School

Relationships and Sex Education (SRE) Policy June 2026

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy Template for Islington schools
Informed by DfE guidance on Relationships education, RSE and health education (2025)

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) policy
(Including relationships education policy for primary schools)

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Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

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Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

SUMMARY

The purpose of this policy is to inform school staff, parents and carers, health professionals and visiting speakers of the school's approach to Relationship and Sex Education. It will be circulated to all staff and to visiting speakers and made available on the school website.

The RSE policy and its implementation will be monitored by **the Senior Leadership Team and PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) Leader and** reviewed every three years by the Governing Board

Definition of RSE

Relationships and sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. We teach it in order to give children essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitive relationships, and the skills to stay safe both off and online. RSE also enables pupils to explore their own and other's attitudes and values to make informed and responsible choices about relationships, health, and well-being and build their self-esteem and confidence.

Roles and responsibilities in school

The memberS of staff responsible for the co-ordination, development, monitoring and evaluation of RSE are **Florence Smith** and **Steph Welburn, PSHE Leads**

The governor or committee with oversight of RSE is **the Safeguarding Committee**

Parents and carers rights and partnership with school

The school works in partnership with parents and carers to educate children and young people about relationships and sex, consulting them regularly on the content of the RSE programme.

Most RSE is taught as part of the National Curriculum, usually in PSHE or Science lessons and these are compulsory for all children (An overview of the curriculum can be found in Appendix 1).

However, in Year 6 there are specific Sex Education lessons and parents have the right to withdraw their children from those classes. (please see below for the topics covered).

Parents will be informed in advance of the contents of Sex Education lessons. It is recommended that parents and carers arrange to meet the Head Teacher to discuss this or any other concerns they have, before removing their child from Sex Education lessons.

Confidentiality and safeguarding

Staff working with pupils cannot offer unconditional or absolute confidentiality. Staff have an obligation to inform pupils of this and to pass information on to the school Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) if anything disclosed during RSE lessons indicates a pupil is at risk of harm.

If pupils disclose to visiting speakers, then the visitor should report this to school staff to follow up.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

Gillespie Primary School

Date of Review: May 2026
Lead: [Headteacher: Mark Owen, PSHE Leads: Florence Smith, Steph Welburn
Approved by: Governing Body: June 2026

Introduction - Purpose of RSE and development of this policy

The purpose of this policy is to be a central reference point to inform school staff, parents, carers, health professionals and visiting speakers of the school's approach to RSE within PSHE. It has been developed involving and considering the needs of staff, governors, pupils, parents and carers.

The policy is to be read in conjunction with the following school policies: Child Protection, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Staff Code of Conduct, Equal Opportunities and our PSHE curriculum documents.

The policy is on our school website and displayed in the school staffroom. Copies are also available from the school office. It is in line with current guidance (see below).

Legislation - statutory requirements

Under the Education Act 2002 and the Children and Social Work Act 2017, all schools must provide:

• Primary Schools: Relationships Education and Health Education – 'All schools must have an up-to-date written policy for relationships education or, where they teach sex education, for RSE' (DfE guidance, page 4, para 12). Islington schools are advised to teach age-appropriate sex education alongside science, and to have an RSE policy. Sex Education is not mandatory but recommended - 'Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but we recommend that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science' (DfE guidance, page 11, para 30).

Primary schools are also required to teach health education.

This policy ensures compliance with:

The Equality Act 2010

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)

DfE guidance on Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (2025)

Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

Aims and content of RSE Curriculum

RSE is taught as part of planned, age-appropriate PSHE education and is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up. Relationships education is developmental and provides a foundation for life transitions and future careers. Sex education in the primary school includes some biology, beginning to understand feelings/intimate relationships. RSE aims to give children and young people essential knowledge and skills for building positive, enjoyable and respectful relationships, understanding acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and staying safe both off and online. RSE enables pupils to explore their own and others' attitudes and values and can help build self-esteem and confidence.

RSE may include some health education. In primary school, 'Developing bodies', is taught. This includes human life cycle, the correct names of body parts and the menstrual cycle – 'whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress' (DfE guidance, page 25).

Our RSE curriculum aims to:

• Prevent harm (including sexual violence and harassment)

Provide accurate, age-appropriate knowledge

• Support children to develop respectful and healthy relationships

• Teach pupils about consent, boundaries, and online safety

• Promote self-respect, empathy, and understanding of different families

• Equip pupils with the skills to recognise and report abuse, exploitation, or unhealthy relationships

• Challenge stereotypes and promote equality, diversity, and inclusion.

We have taken into account the guiding principles of the DfE guidance (page 5):

1. Engagement with pupils (well-sequenced, relevant and engaging content based on engagement)

2. Engagement and transparency with parents (openness about materials, which are available to parents)

3. Positivity (attitudes and skills; avoiding language that normalises harmful behaviour)

4. Careful sequencing (preparing children for real-life experiences before they happen to build skills and prevent harms)

5. Relevance and responsiveness (age-appropriate, responsive to local context)

6. Skilled delivery (delivered by trained staff or external providers in a safe, supportive environment with accurate content)

7. Whole-school approach (integrated with other policies (e.g., behaviour and safeguarding) and committed to positive relationships.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

Summary of RSE curriculum content:

The government guidance DfE guidance on relationship and health education, and the science national curriculum, detail what must be taught in primary schools. (See Appendix 1 showing when we teach each aspect.)

Sex and health education (statutory) taught within primary PSHE lessons (based Islington's scheme of work, 'You, Me, PSHE).

Learning intentions and outcomes:

Year 2 health education:

Pupils learn the biological differences between male and female children

Pupils:

- identify and name biological terms for male and female private parts
- label the male and female private parts with confidence
- understand that the male and female private parts are related to reproduction

Year 6 RSE:

Pupils learn about human reproduction in the context of the human lifecycle:

- know that sexual intercourse may be one part of a sexual relationship
- can describe how babies are made and explain how sexual intercourse is related to conception

Pupils learn how a baby is made and grows (conception and pregnancy):

- can define conception and understand the importance of implantation in the womb
- know what pregnancy is, where it occurs and how long it takes

and additionally:

Pupils learn some myths and misconceptions about HIV, who it affects and how it can and cannot be transmitted:

- know that HIV can affect anyone, not a specific group or type of person
- can identify how HIV can and cannot be passed on
- know that the risk of HIV being passed on through sexual intercourse can be reduced if a condom is used

Pupils learn that contraception can be used to stop a baby from being conceived:

- know that a condom stops sperm from meeting an egg and therefore stops fertilisation
- know that women can take a pill to stop an egg being released, preventing conception
- understand contraception is both partners' responsibility.

Further teaching materials are available through Islington's PSHE SharePoint for staff reference - see Islington PSHE page

Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

Teaching and learning in RSE

RSE is delivered as part of PSHE education, alongside Science and Computing (online safety). It is taught in a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental environment using a variety of teaching methods. It is developmental and well planned, intending for all pupils to feel comfortable to engage in open discussion and confident to ask for help.

Inclusion, faith culture and safeguarding children

RSE is inclusive of all pupils, respecting different backgrounds, cultures, faiths, and family situations.

Our curriculum is in line with the Equality Act 2010. All children and young people, whatever their experience, background or identity, are entitled to good quality RSE that helps them build a positive sense of self. The RSE programme and approach is inclusive of difference: faith or belief, culture, LGBTQ+ and gender identity, sexual orientation, ability, disability, ethnicity, age or any other life experience. RSE lessons help pupils to explore discrimination, prejudice, bullying, aggressive behaviour and other unhealthy relationships.

RSE lessons follow safeguarding protocols:

• Pupils are encouraged to ask questions in a safe and anonymous way.

• Teachers provide factual, unbiased information.

• If a safeguarding concern arises, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed.

RSE enables pupils to:

- understand what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is
- know their rights to be protected and kept safe
- understand potential dangers they could face
- be encouraged to adopt safe and responsible practices and deal sensibly with risk
- develop personal skills to protect themselves and others from unsafe influences and physical and emotional harm
- know when, how and who to ask for help

Effective RSE helps to address sexual abuse and sexual harassment, ensuring pupils understand what respectful behaviour looks like, understand and communicate about consent and that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong.

Staff approach RSE sensitively, knowing that pupils are individual and will have different family groupings. Teachers' personal beliefs, values and attitudes should not affect their teaching of RSE.

See Appendix 11, Inclusion points from DfE guidance.

Disclosures

Follow the school's policy set out in our Child Protection Policy.

Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

Working with parents and carers – rights and engagement

Consultation and requests to withdraw

• Parents are the primary educators of their children about RSE and values and RSE should complement their roles. Parents/carers are consulted on the RSE policy and curriculum and we work in partnership. Parents are informed about RSE lessons in advance and provided with resources and terminology used on request. Children may disclose information about themselves in RSE and teachers are trained to handle disclosures and questions sensitively and appropriately. This can include speaking to parents and the designated safeguarding lead.

• In primary school, parents may withdraw their child from sex education (***but not relationships or science topics).***

How the school informs and works with parents

- Special parents' evenings where the RSE programme is discussed
- Before RSE lessons a letter is sent to parents and carers describing the RSE their children will cover. In this way, parents and carers can be prepared to have conversations at home
- Advice for parents on how to confidently talk to their children about sex and relationships
- Sharing information with parents on the school's principles and values and how these inform policies and the curriculum
- Information in newsletters and on the school website.

Working with external visitors and PSHE contributors

Clarify how the visit or session fits with school values and the context of the PSHE curriculum and provide guidance on safeguarding in PSHE

Make time to discuss the session (including objectives, assessment, monitoring and evaluation, including pupil voice)

View the plan/materials/video resources in advance to check they are appropriate.

Liaise with the SENCO/DSL/SLT/pastoral team to check if the content could be triggering of bring up feelings for any children due to their circumstances and experiences

Share the classroom expectations (e.g., protocols around disclosures and PSHE working agreements/ground rules) including children not revealing information that may incriminate themselves or others or that they wish to remain confidential

The class teacher will always present if a visitor is delivering an RSE lesson.

Share relevant policies on handling sensitive issues and confidentiality, health and safety, behaviour and subject content (e.g., Drugs, tobacco and vaping/RSE/Safeguarding)

Parents and children notified of the upcoming session (depending on the topic and school policy)

Consider an additional room/space for any children who may need to step out of the session for a while.

Signpost to other support - before, during and after the session

Relationships and sex education (RSE) policy (including relationship education for primary schools)

The RSE policy is reviewed every 3 years in consultation with the governing body. If there are changes in legislation which result in policy changes further consultation with parents and carers will be organised. The effectiveness of RSE lessons is evaluated through pupil feedback, staff reflection, and curriculum assessments.

Further information and contact

For more information or to discuss concerns, please contact:
The Head or PSHE leads: Florence Smith & Steph Welburn
Office@gillespie.islington.sch.uk
Telephone: 0207 2266840

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Curriculum Content

The relationship and health education (RHE) strand from Islington ' you; Me PSHE' resource is shown below, the highlighted text is sex education.

Key Stage 1		Lower Key Stage 2		Upper Key Stage 2	
RHE, Boys and girls and families	**Other Areas of PSHE**	**RHE, growing up and changing**	**Other Areas of PSHE**	**RHE, Healthy relationships**	**Other Areas of PSHE**
• Pupils understand and respect the differences and similarities between people • Pupils learn about the biological differences between male and female animals and their role in the life cycle • Pupils learn the biological differences between male and female children including biological names of private parts • Understand that male and female private parts are related to reproduction • Pupils learn about growing from old to	**Drug, alcohol and tobacco education** • about what goes onto our bodies and how it can make people feel **Mental health and emotional well-being** • about being co-operative with others **Keeping safe and managing risk** • about personal safety and who they can talk to **Identity, society and equality** • about people that are special to them and what they do	• Pupils learn about the way we grow and change throughout the human lifecycle • Pupils learn about the impact of puberty in physical hygiene and strategies for managing this • Pupils learn about the physical changes associated with puberty • Pupils learn about menstruation and wet dreams • Pupils learn how puberty affects emotions and behaviour and strategies for dealing with the changes associated with puberty	**Mental health and emotional well being** • about similarities and differences between themselves and others • about what makes a good friend • about dealing with issues that might arise in friendship • about different emotions and how to manage these	• Pupils learn about the changes that occur during puberty • Pupils learn to consider different attitudes and values around gender, stereotyping and sexuality; their origin and impact • Pupils learn what values are important to them in relationships and to appreciate the importance of friendship in intimate friendships • Pupils learn about human reproduction in the context of the human life cycle • Pupils learn how sexual intercourse is related to conception, how a	**Mental health and emotional well being** • about stereotyping including gender stereotyping • about prejudice and discrimination (in relation to homophobia) and how this can make people feel

Appendix 1: Curriculum Content

Key Stage 1		Lower Key Stage 2		Upper Key Stage 2	
RHE, Boys and girls and families	**Other Areas of PSHE**	**RHE, growing up and changing**	**Other Areas of PSHE**	**RHE, Healthy relationships**	**Other Areas of PSHE**
young and that they are growing and changing • Pupils learn that everybody needs to be cared for and ways in which they care for others • Pupils learn about different types of family and how their home-life is special		• Pupils learn strategies to deal with feelings in the context of relationships		baby is made and grows (conception and pregnancy) • Pupils learn about roles and responsibilities of carers and parents **Year 6, HIV and contraception** • Pupils learn about some myths and misconceptions about HIV, who it affects and how it can and cannot be transmitted • Pupils learn that contraception can be used to stop a baby from being conceived	

Appendix 2: Science National Curriculum

Primary curriculum

Key Stage 1

Year 1

Animals, including humans

- Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body and say which part of the body is associated with each sense

Year 2

Animals, including humans

- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring, which grow into adults.

Upper Key Stage 2

Year 5

Living things and their habitats

- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals

  (Pupils should find out about different types of reproduction, including sexual and asexual reproduction in plants, and sexual reproduction in animals.)

Animals, including humans

- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age

  (Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.)

Appendix :3 Assessment

Assessment

Assessment is the process where an individual pupil's learning and achievement are measured against the lesson objectives.

Lessons should be planned starting with establishing what pupils already know - in this way, teachers can address any misconceptions that pupils may have, strategies include:

- brainstorms and discussions
- draw and write activities to find out what pupils already know
- continuums/diamond nine and other activities to find out what pupil's feel is important to them

Pre- and post-topic assessment may also provide some indication of progress made by pupils in their understanding/articulation of RSE issues; this could be carried out through:

- pupil reflective assessment sheets at the end of each topic
- written or oral assignments
- quizzes
- pupil self-evaluation
- reflective logbooks
- one to one discussion

Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring ensures that teaching is in line with school policy and that pupils are taught what is intended. Evaluation helps to plan future lessons and enables teachers to review the programme to improve the teaching and learning.

A range of methods can be used for monitoring and evaluation, which should be led by the PSHE subject lead or a senior leader. Methods include:

- lesson observations
- teachers' additions/amendments to the planned lesson content
- pupils completing end of topic evaluations
- teachers completing end of topic evaluations
- annual PSHE review
- reports to parents at parent consultation evenings
- data collected from initial need assessment is compared to same assessment at end of topic.

Appendix 4: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

Please complete the form below to request a meeting with the school about withdrawing your child from sex education within RSE

To be completed by parents			
Name of child		**Class**	
Name of parent		**Date**	
Reason for wishing to withdraw 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 and their child	