



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy 2025 - 2027

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Introduction

We believe RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) is an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life. Effective RSE can foster self-esteem, encourage personal and social development, as well as self-awareness, and a sense of moral responsibility. Additionally, it can give students the confidence and ability to make responsible and informed decisions about health and well-being. Crucially, it can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain healthy relationships.

RSE is relevant and appropriate to the lives of young people, regardless of their family background or sexuality. The positive qualities of relationships such as trust, honesty and commitment, should be stressed rather than the promotion of one form of sexual relationship or sexual orientation.

We believe it is important to address this area of the curriculum because in the 21st century it ensures that children are receiving a reliable source of information and an opportunity to explore the messages they are receiving in a safe learning environment. It is important to note that RSE at our school sits within the school's values framework and that we consider it vital to do this work in partnership with parents and carers.

Whilst we hope parents/carers do not feel the need to do so, we are mindful that they do have the legal right to withdraw their children from the RSE element of the PSHE Programme.

Statutory RSE and Health Education

- Relationship and Sex education (RSE) is compulsory from age 11 onwards however the 2025 RSHE guidance now recommends delivery in Years 5 and 6. It involves teaching children about reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. It doesn't promote early sexual activity or any particular sexual orientation.
- Some parts of relationship and sex education are compulsory - these are part of the national curriculum for science. Parents can withdraw their children from all other parts of sex and relationship education if they want.
- All schools must have a written policy on sex education, which they must make available to parents for free.
- The Government's Education White Paper, The Importance of Teaching, published in November 2010, stated:
"Children need high-quality relationships and sex education so they can make wise and informed choices".

Government guidelines also refer to the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society.

"The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2025, 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."

DfE Guidance p.2.

"Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way."

"This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools."

"In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex."

"Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise."

"These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others' wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society."

Secretary of State Foreword, DfE Guidance 2025.

"Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in the DfE guidance 2019 in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is

broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons.”

DfE Guidance p.4

“All schools must have an up-to-date written policy for relationships education or, where they teach sex education, for RSE.”

DfE Guidance p.4.

Here, at Cranborne Middle School we value PSHE as a way to support students’ development as human beings, to enable them to understand and respect who they are, to empower them with a voice and to equip them for life and learning.

We include the statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education within our whole-school PSHE Programme.

To ensure progression and a spiral curriculum, we use Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, as our chosen teaching and learning programme and tailor it to our students’ needs. The mapping document, ‘Jigsaw 11-16 and statutory RSE and Health Education’, shows exactly how Jigsaw and, therefore, our school, meets the statutory RSE and Health Education requirements.

This programme’s complimentary update policy ensures we are always using the most up-to-date teaching materials and that our teachers are well-supported.

Our PSHE policy is informed by existing DfE guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC))
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development).

The Jigsaw Programme is aligned to the PSHE Association Programmes of Study for PSHE (mapping document available on the Community Area of www.jigsawpshe.com) and aligned to the definitions of Relationships and Sex Education offered by the Sex Education Forum (National Children’s Bureau, April 2020).

Equality

This policy will inform the school's Equalities Policy

The DfE Guidance 2025 states, "Schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics..."

At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender), they should ensure this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum".

At Cranborne Middle School we promote respect for all and value every individual student. We also respect the right of our students, their families and our staff, to hold beliefs, religious or otherwise, and understand that sometimes these may be in tension with our approach to some aspects of RSE and Health Education.

Curriculum

Teachers of PSHCE will primarily be responsible for the teaching of relationship and sex education, although the science department and the use of outside speakers, such as the school nurse, may compliment it. Staff have a responsibility to ensure the safety and welfare of their pupils. They are in a particular position of trust (in loco parentis). Personal beliefs and attitudes of staff should not influence the teaching of RSE, all those contributing to the programme are expected to work within the framework provided.

Curriculum

The majority of RSE learning takes place within PSHCE but the values and many of the skills behind this learning have an important cross-curricular involvement. Within PSHCE the following key learning intentions underpin the main units where RSE takes place:

Key stage 2

Learning Intentions/outcomes

Year 5

The **Relationships** unit includes:

- Encouraging children to have an accurate picture of who they are as a person in terms of their characteristics and personal qualities.
- Knowing how to keep building their own self-esteem and that of others.
- Understanding that belonging to an online community can have positive and negative consequences.
- Recognising when an online community feels unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Understanding there are rights and responsibilities in an online community or social network.
- Recognising when an online community is helpful or unhelpful to them.
- Knowing there are rights and responsibilities when playing games online.
- Recognising when an online game is becoming unhelpful or unsafe.
- Recognising when they are spending too much time using devices (screen time).
- Identifying things they can do to reduce screen time, so their health is not affected.

- Explaining how to stay safe when using technology to communicate with their friends.
- Recognising and resisting pressures to use technology in ways that may be risky or harmful.

The specific lessons in the **Changing Me** unit of work sit within six lessons which look at change and coping with change in lots of contexts, so changes as we grow up and enter puberty are seen as one sort of change that we can all cope with.

- To be aware of their own self-image and how their body image fits into this.
- To know how to develop their own self-esteem.
- Explaining how a girl's body changes during puberty and the importance of looking after yourself physically and emotionally.
- Understanding that sexual intercourse can lead to conception and that is how babies are usually made.
- Also understanding that sometimes people need IVF to help them have a baby.
- Expressing how they feel about the changes that will happen to them during puberty.
- Identifying what they are looking forward to about becoming a teenager and understanding this brings growing responsibilities.
- Being confident that they can cope with the changes that growing up will bring.

Year 6

The **Relationships** unit includes:

- Knowing it is important to take care of their mental health and how to do this.
- Understanding that people can get problems with their mental health and that is nothing to be ashamed of.
- Knowing how to help themselves and others when worried about a mental health problem.
- Understanding there are different stages of grief and that there are different types of loss for people to grieve.
- Recognising when they feel emotions of loss and have strategies to manage them.
- Recognising when people are trying to gain power or control.
- Demonstrating ways they could stand up for themselves and their friends in situations where others are trying to gain control or power.
- Judging whether something online is safe and helpful for them.
- Resisting pressure to do something online that might hurt themselves or others.
- Using technology positively and safely to communicate with their friends and family.
- Taking responsibility for their own safety and wellbeing.

The **Changing Me** unit includes:

- Being aware of their own self-image and how their body image fits into that.
- Knowing how to develop their own self esteem.
- Explaining how boys' and girls' bodies change during puberty.
- Expressing how they feel about the changes that will happen during puberty.
- Understanding the importance of looking after yourself physically and emotionally during puberty.
- Describing how a baby develops from conception through the nine months of pregnancy, and how it is born.
- Recognising how they feel when they reflect on the development and birth of a baby.
- Understanding how being physically attracted to someone changes the nature of the relationship and what that might mean about having a girlfriend / boyfriend.
- Understanding that respect for one another is essential in a boyfriend / girlfriend relationship, and that they should not feel pressured into doing something they don't want to.

- Knowing themselves well enough to maintain positive relationships with others whilst keeping their own identity.
- Being assertive when appropriate
- Being aware of the importance of a positive self-esteem and what they can do to develop it.
- Expressing how they feel about their self-image and knowing how to challenge negative 'body-talk'.

It is a statutory requirement to teach aspects of RSE included in the **science curriculum**. This includes at **Key Stage 2:**

- That life processes common to humans and other animals include nutrition, growth and reproduction.
- About the main stages of the human life cycle.

Key stage 3

Learning Intentions/outcomes

Year 7

The **Relationship** unit includes:

- Identifying characteristics and benefits of positive, strong and supportive, equal relationships.
- Understanding what expectations might be of having a romantic/ special relationship.
- Understanding what is meant by consent.
- Recognising the range of positive qualities people bring to relationships.
- Understanding why respect for the other person's wishes is important in relationships.
- Identifying the supportive relationships in their lives.
- Identifying why people sometimes fall out.
- Suggesting ways to manage conflict within friendships groups.
- Identifying emotions that can be associated with falling out.
- Understanding that discernment is an important skill when being a consumer of media.
- Recognising when to use assertiveness in some of their relationships.
- Understanding the personal and legal consequences of sexting.
- Suggesting skills which will keep relationships happy and healthy.
- Explaining their understanding of respect and authenticity.
- The **Changing Me** unit includes:
 - Understanding the changes that happen to someone's body during puberty.
 - Understanding how some of the changes that happen can affect feelings and emotions.
 - Expressing how they feel about the changes that happen and that people develop at different rates (Explaining how girls' and boys' bodies change during puberty and understand the importance of looking after themselves physically and emotionally).
 - Knowing some of the ways a baby can be conceived.
 - Understanding how a baby develops inside the uterus and is born.
 - Expressing the different feelings and choices that people may have and make about conception, pregnancy and having a baby.
 - Appreciate that having a baby comes with responsibilities.
 - Knowing there are different types of committed stable relationships and that some people may choose to have children or not.

- Making links between positive, healthy family relationships and effective parenting.
- Identifying some of the roles and responsibilities of being a parent.
- Knowing the media can have a positive or negative impact on a person's self-esteem or body image.
- Knowing where to go for help if I am worried about my body image or self-esteem
- Understanding how self-image is linked to self-esteem and knowing strategies to build their self-esteem.
- Knowing some of the changes in my brain during puberty and where to access support if I am worried about this.
- Being aware of some of the emotional changes during puberty.
- Knowing that no one can make changes to their body without their permission and that FGM is illegal in the UK.

Year 8

The **Relationship** unit includes:

- Understanding that relationship skills have to be learned and practised, including the one with themselves.
- Understanding that social media can affect both positively and negatively how they feel about themselves.
- Understanding that relationships can cause strong feelings and emotions.
- Understanding the features of positive and stable relationships.
- Understanding that all relationships have positive and less positive aspects.
- Defining what is meant by personal space and how this varies across their relationships.
- Discussing how personal space differs across different cultures.
- Understanding etiquette and manners in relation to privacy both on and offline.
- Knowing some steps that can be taken if their personal space, privacy or both are being threatened
- Understanding what is meant by control, power balance and coercion in a relationship
- Understanding that carrying a knife can lead to serious consequences for them and others around them.
- Knowing what a good relationship looks like and how to protect themselves from an unhealthy relationship
- Knowing where to seek help if they feel unsafe in a relationship
- Understanding how to use social media appropriately, safely and legally
- Giving examples of how personal safety can be compromised online
- Understanding some of the emotional risks associated with inappropriate use of social media
- Explaining what is meant by the term neurodivergent

The **Changing Me** unit includes:

- Knowing different types of close, intimate relationships that people can have
- Knowing what happens physically and emotionally when individuals experience physical attraction
- Knowing that intimate relationships do not have to involve sex
- Knowing some of the positive behaviours seen in healthier, intimate relationships
- Understanding the positive aspects of having a girlfriend or boyfriend
- Describing some of the behaviours they would expect to find in a healthier romantic relationship

- Identifying what they would seek in a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship
- Comparing and contrasting the key features of healthier and less healthy romantic relationships
- Understanding the range of feelings associated with attraction
- Knowing where to get information to safely explore feelings about sexuality
- Recognising that attraction towards others takes many forms and can change over time
- Knowing that pornographic images do not reflect reality
- Knowing how pornography can affect expectations and self-image
- Understanding the negative influence pornography can have on relationships
- Listing some risks associated with drinking too much alcohol, including unprotected sex, non-consensual sex
- Knowing what the law says in relation to sex and alcohol
- Describing the behaviour changes that can occur when people drink alcohol

It is a **statutory** requirement to teach aspects of RSE included in the **science curriculum**. This includes at Key Stage 3:

Reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.

Withdrawal from RSE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Sex and Relationships Education provided at school except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum Science. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or Subject Leader who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

Assessment

Formal assessment is no longer required in PSHCE but pupil attendance is tracked in key lessons and absent children are brought up to date with the information. However, monitoring and assessment methods in the PSHCE lessons remain in place and effort grades are given in termly Progress Checks. Examples of progress monitoring are:

- Self assessment of work and activities completed.
- Class discussion and activities, aimed at helping pupils to grasp the concepts of each lesson.
- Pupil reflection of their learning, including further questions they would like answered.

Inclusion and differentiation

Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Teachers will need, as always, to tailor each unit to meet the needs of the children in their classes. Teachers must take into account the differing genders, disabilities, cultures, ethnicities, religion, beliefs and life experiences of the children they are educating At Key Stage 2, to further help teachers differentiate for children in their classes with special educational needs, each unit of work includes a P-level grid with suggested activities for children working at each of those levels.

Involving Parents and Carers

The school will inform parents in advance of any RSE work being taught, offering all parents the opportunity to preview any resources and material which will be used. The RSE policy will be available to read and the subject leader will always be on hand to answer any concerns a parent or carer may have a detailed copy of the scheme of work will also be available.

Monitoring and evaluation

The PSHE subject leader will monitor delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness will be conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience

External contributors

External contributors from the community, e.g. health promotion specialists, school nurses, and community police, can make a valuable contribution to the RSE programme. Their input should be carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

Teachers MUST always be present during these sessions and remain responsible for the delivery of the PSHCE programme.

Answering Difficult Questions and Sensitive Issues

The school believes that students should have the opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a student may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how. They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing ground rules with pupils and by taking an approach that encourages pupils to be mature and sensible. If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later, if appropriate, with the student who asked it. If a question is too personal, teachers will remind pupils about the ground rules and if necessary point out appropriate sources of support. If a teacher is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse they will follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff members are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE issues are taught without bias. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion.

Our school believes that RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support. In units of work that cover RSE provision, this should be regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school will liaise with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context at the parents'/carers' information meetings.

Confidentiality and Safeguarding

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. This should be done in the initial ground rules lesson which all PSHCE teachers are required to do. Child protection procedures must be followed immediately when any disclosures of abuse or potential abuse are made; the child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported throughout the process.

It is very rare for a pupil to request absolute confidentiality. If they do, in situations other than those involving child protection issues, staff must make a careful judgement about whether or not a third party needs to be informed. This judgement will be based upon:

- The seriousness of the situation and the degree of harm that the student may be experiencing
- The student's age, maturity and competence to make their own decisions

When it is clear that a student would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might inform the third party together with the student. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Supporting "At Risk" Pupils

During the teaching of RSE, children may give cause for concern and the member of staff is responsible for informing the tutor or year leader, or if necessary directly seeking help from the one of the Designated Senior Leads (DSLs). The DSLs should also inform a member of staff if there are issues that the teacher should be aware of BEFORE the unit of work is commenced.

Computing and RSE

Pupils will be taught the importance of internet safety across all year groups and the potential dangers that the internet and mobile phones can pose in this context. This will be delivered by the Computing department in conjunction with the PSHCE department and tutor-based activities.

Pupil Consultation:

Pupils will be able to reflect on their learning and be given the chance to express their views on topics and issues that they consider should be included in any RSE scheme of work. The Subject Leader will take these views into account, where appropriate, when updating and devising schemes of work and reviewing the RSE policy.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between RSE and the following policies and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Science curriculum
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Health and Safety
- Confidentiality
- Pastoral Support
- PSHCE Policy
- School Visits
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- ICT Policy

Dissemination

This policy is available on our school website where it can be accessed by the community. Training is regularly delivered to staff on the policy content. Copies are available from the school office on request from parents/carers.