



RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

NORTHERN COUNTIES SCHOOL

Policy Name: Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy (NCS)	Issue Date: September 2025	Version No: 4.0
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Policy Control/Monitoring

Approved by: (Position in Organisation)	Headteacher
Date (dd/mm/yyyy):	30.09.25
Accountability: (Position in Organisation)	Curriculum Leader
Revision Cycle:	Biennial
Brief details of amendments made	Updated in line with revised national guidance

Equality Impact Assessment

The Foundation's commitment is to create a positive culture of respect for all staff and service users and to identify, remove or minimise risks of unlawful discrimination and disadvantage in its policies, functions and activities. As part of its development this document has been assessed in line with The Foundation's equality impact assessment procedure.

Version Control Tracker

Version Number	Date
1.0	6.10.20
2.0	16.1.23
3.0	16.1.24
4.0	30.9.25

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1. Introduction

This policy describes how Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is delivered within Northern Counties School.

At Northern Counties School we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of 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 Northern Counties School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

2. Purpose

Effective relationship and sex education (RSE) is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. At Northern Counties School, RSE is a basic entitlement which contributes to the overall personal and social development of each pupil. The nature of RSE encompasses the provision of on-going, truthful and honest information presented in a non-judgemental manner within a relaxed and confidential setting. RSE is an integral part of the curriculum and is taught throughout school via a multi-disciplinary team approach. The content is carefully considered for each pupil and will be influenced according to level and stage of development of each young person. The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Contribute to the overall personal and social development of each pupil on an individualised basis to enable them to maximise their potential in preparation for life after school.
- Provide a high-quality framework in which sensitive discussions appropriate to the needs of each young person can take place whilst ensuring that students can express clearly their feelings and ideas in ways, which can be understood by others. The framework will be delivered via transdisciplinary work within the class team including speech and language therapists and occupational therapists supporting learning in this area.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Support pupils to develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy. Pupils who are aware that they are able to make their own choices and express their own opinions in a friendly and secure atmosphere will be more able to discuss and share ideas about sex and relationships education in a positive and sensible manner.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships

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- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary (written, spoken, signed) and language to describe themselves, their emotions and their bodies. The importance of knowing and using accurate names of parts of the body and being able to describe emotions effectively is specifically taught and generalized in all areas of school life.
- Teach pupils the importance of keeping safe online to equip students with the skills to navigate the digital world responsibly, covering topics like appropriate online behaviour, understanding privacy, managing online identity, deep fakes and AI and recognising and responding to risks such as cyberbullying or contact with strangers.
- Support pupils to address grief and loss by fostering a safe and supportive environment where students can openly discuss feelings associated with change and bereavement.
- Enable pupils to understand the risks associated with financial exploitation by teaching students to recognise and resist scams, fraud, and extortion, including sextortion, within the broader context of safeguarding
- Acknowledge that RSE incorporates lifelong learning about ourselves, including our emotions, self-esteem, relationships, rights and responsibilities, sexual behaviour, sexuality and sexual health. RSE learning takes place in many contexts: at home, at school and in the community.
- Promote RSE as an entitlement for all young people. Difference and diversity must be taken into account when delivering RSE. Special educational needs or disability, gender, sexual orientation and age, nationality, religion, cultural and linguistic background, all affect access to RSE.
- RSE is most effective when provided in the wider context of social and emotional development. In schools, successful RSE is firmly rooted in personal, social and health education (PSHE).
- Liaise with families to ensure parents are informed effectively about what their child is being taught.

3. Scope

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

Review – a working group 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 invited to consult on the policy and meetings held as appropriate

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Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE and how to deliver it in a manner that would benefit all pupils.

Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Definitions

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 is an integral part of each person's learning process, which begins in childhood and continues into adult life.

All pupils, regardless of gender, race or disability should have access to appropriate RSE. The curriculum should be delivered in a way that addresses the need for differentiation and is relevant to each person's individual needs.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Principles

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, specific needs and feelings of pupils. 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.

Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. RSE lessons are part of all learners weekly timetables. Biological aspects of RSE are also taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are also included in religious education (RE). For those pupils with more complex needs teaching will be embedded across the curriculum with a handful of topics taught in discrete sessions linked to the engagement model.

There should be a collaborative approach to the delivery of sex and relationships education and should involve persons from our transdisciplinary teams including the wellbeing team and if appropriate external agencies.

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

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- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Emotions including change, loss and bereavement
- Respectful relationships including friendships including discrete teaching of choice, boundaries and consent.
- Online relationships/social media – where appropriate pupils, will be taught about aspects of relationships and the development of relationships (grooming, sexual, financial or political relating to the Prevent Agenda)
- Being safe including personal safety and online safety
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health. The teaching about sex and sexuality will be set within a framework, which encourages responsibility and tolerance within personal relationships
- There will be careful input on sensitive issues, such as masturbation.

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 or cultural backgrounds (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).

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

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

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 9`).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive, differentiated way appropriate to the needs of the pupils they are working with
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

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- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from specific components of RSE curriculum

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 curriculum lead or headteacher.

Pupils

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

Parents' right to withdraw

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

Parents do 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 3 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.

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 will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE as deemed necessary.

6. Monitoring and Compliance

The delivery of RSE is monitored by SLT through:

- Learning walks by members of SLT/MLT
- Schools Quality Assurance and Deep Dive process
- Lesson observations
- Student voice
- Monitoring of mid- term and short-term planning

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

This policy will be reviewed by Martin Lonergan Head Teacher annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

7. Associated Policies and References

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Revised July 2025 guidance on 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' which will come into force 1 September 2026 and revised in December 2025.
- Working together to safeguard children 2026
- Keeping children safe in education
- Children and social work act 2017
- Education act 1996

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