



MAYFIELD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Believe It! Achieve It!

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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Introduction

This policy has been updated to reflect the DfE statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025), which comes into force from 1 September 2026. As Mayfield pupils are primary age, and not secondary age, pupils are taught Relationships Education, and not Sex Education, in line with the DfE statutory guidance above. We recognise our responsibility to promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our pupils. We aim to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adolescence and adult life. We seek to provide a safe and stimulating environment which, in partnership with parents and the wider community, will enable pupils to learn about moral, physical and emotional development.

What is Body Image?

Body image is a broad concept that refers to the way people think and feel about their appearance. It encompasses ideas about size and shape, skin colour, birthmarks, scars, facial features, clothing and adornments relating to personal and religious beliefs, physical disabilities and the use of equipment or aids such as prostheses or wheelchairs. There are a range of factors that contribute to a person's body image and family members, other important adults (including teaching staff), peers and the media all play a significant role.

Why is it important?

Positive body image helps children to feel good about themselves and supports their mental health and wellbeing in childhood and beyond. Children with a positive body image are comfortable with their physical appearance and are more likely to think about their body in terms of its functionality rather than its form – that is, they focus mostly on the way their body helps them to do the things they want to do like playing sport, climbing trees or walking the dog, rather than how their body looks. Children with positive body image might not be completely satisfied with their appearance, but they concentrate on assets rather than flaws. This way of thinking contributes to a positive sense of self-worth. It helps children to detect and fulfil the body's needs, which means they might be more likely to appreciate the value of exercise and make healthy food choices that help the body to perform well. Unfortunately, it is common for both boys and girls to experience negative thoughts or feelings about their appearance or dissatisfaction with the way their bodies look. When children have issues with self-worth and body image, they are at an increased risk for developing unhealthy attitudes to eating and issues with dieting as well as a low mood. Evidence suggests that low self-worth and body dissatisfaction might play a role in the development of serious mental health issues like depression and eating disorders in adolescence and beyond.

What is relationships and sex education? (RSE)

It is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding and appreciation of family life, marriage, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of physical and emotional changes to the body. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity - this would be inappropriate teaching. Teaching will include same-sex parents when discussing different kinds of family models and factual teaching about biological sex and gender reassignment, without endorsing contested views.

Why should RSE be taught in school?

RSE begins at a very early age and, while much of it is learnt from parents, it is also received from friends, books, magazines, television, internet, music, films and so on. Some of this information can be incorrect, confusing or frightening. RSE in school provides a secure framework and environment in which pupils can be given the facts using appropriate materials. It also allows them to develop necessary personal skills and a positive attitude to physical and emotional health and well-being and moral development. Wide-ranging research has shown that children want information about changes and situations they will experience before they happen to them. A safe, supportive and structured programme in school increases the probability of this being achieved. Also, although children want to be able to discuss hormonal changes and relationships with their parents, many parents and children prefer the school to take a lead and provide a springboard for the discussion. A partnership between home and school and open dialogue between parent and child are the ideal. A successful programme, firmly embedded in the school's personal, social, health, emotional and economic education (PSHE), will help children learn to respect themselves and others and allow them to move, with confidence, from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Online Safety

RSE will explicitly address online risks including fake social media accounts, AI-generated content and deepfakes, and the pressure to share images online.

Aims and Objectives for RSE

The aim of RSE is to provide children with age-appropriate information, explore attitudes and values and develop skills in order to empower them to make positive decisions about their health-related behaviour. This should take place with consideration of the qualities of relationships within families.

The objectives of RSE are:

- To provide the knowledge and information to which all pupils are entitled;
- To clarify/reinforce existing knowledge;
- To raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others (including safety online);
- To help pupils understand their feelings and behaviour, so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives;
- To help pupils develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness) and make the most of their abilities;
- To provide the confidence to be participating members of society and to value themselves and others;
- To help gain access to information and support;
- To develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle (including mental health);
- To develop and use communication skills and assertiveness skills to cope with the influences of their peers and the media;
- To respect and care for their bodies;
- To support children to develop a strong sense of self and skills to buffer unhelpful messages about body image;
- To display information and posters that reflect the diversity of students thereby ensuring that the school is welcoming and supportive to all children and families;

- To provide education on fitness and nutrition that has a positive focus upon energy, fun, social connection and health;
- To provide food in schools that is nutritious and balanced;
- To provide information/training for families that looks at how to support children to develop a positive body image and sense of self;
- To help pupils learn to recognise the early signs of body dissatisfaction and refer children and families to health professionals if necessary; and
- To be prepared for puberty and adulthood.

Moral and values framework

The DfE guidance states that RSE should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students. It should stress the importance of relationships for family life, stable and loving interactions, respect, love and care. As part of RSE, pupils should be taught about the nature and importance of marriage for family life and bringing up children. But the Government recognises – as in the Home Office, Ministerial Group on the Family consultation document Supporting Families - that there are strong and mutually supportive relationships outside marriage. Therefore, pupils should learn the significance of marriage and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society. Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances. All those who teach aspects of RSE within the school, including visitors, are expected to be guided by the following values framework which represents the values held in common by the whole school community. The teaching of RSE will encourage students to:

- Value and respect themselves;
- Value and respect others for who they are, not for what they have or what they can do;
- Value healthy relationships which are based on mutual respect, care and goodwill;
- Value and respect difference in people's religion, culture, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability and social background;
- Value and respect their own and others' rights to make choices in relationships after having accepted responsibility for considering the consequences of those choices; and
- Value stable and loving relationships for the nurturing of children and as the basis of a society in which people care for one another.

The personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers or other teaching staff will not influence the teaching of relationship and sex education in this school. Teachers and all of those contributing to RSE are expected to work within an agreed values framework as described in the school's policy.

Teaching staff and the age-related plans for delivery of RSE

There are teachers with responsibility for coordinating RSE. They are the Head of RE/PSHE and the Head of Science.

Age related plans for delivery are available in Appendix 1

Some personal, social and health aspects of RSE are taught within the PSHEE programme.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the Science curriculum and some moral aspects are taught within the Religious Education curriculum. RSE is taught by classroom teachers, teaching assistants and if appropriate, outside visitors. A range of teaching methods which involve children's full participation are used to teach RSE. These include use of small group work, media, discussion, case studies, drama and role-play. Ground rules and distancing techniques are used to establish a safe environment to facilitate discussions and students are encouraged to reflect on their learning. RSE can be delivered either in mixed or single gender groups as appropriate.

Use of visitors

Visitors to school, such as parents, health professionals and members of voluntary organisations, may be invited to enhance the delivery of RSE lessons, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people. The school will follow the guidance in DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019) (Updated July 2025) when visitors to the school contribute to the delivery of the RSE curriculum. The school will ensure that the visitor's or visiting organisation's credentials are checked. They will be given a copy of this policy and will be expected to work within the values framework described within. The school will discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver the sessions, ensure the content is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. The school will also view the materials and lesson plans visitors will use in advance to ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs). All curriculum materials and resources used by visitors, including lesson plans and supporting materials, will be made available for parents to view on request.

The school will ensure that the visitors' contributions to lessons are in line with the learning outcomes of the school's RSE programme and will enhance the teaching by the teacher leading the lesson.

Teaching methodology

The school is committed to employing active learning methods which involve children's full participation. It is essential that schools can help children develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships. Before starting RSE lessons ground rules are discussed and agreed with the children.

These ground rules will help the teacher create a safe environment which will minimise any embarrassment the children might feel and will discourage inappropriate personal disclosures. Most lessons will be taught to full classes, with gender groups for certain topics as deemed appropriate.

- **Ground rules** help to create a safe environment for both teacher and pupil. They should be established with each class before RSE lessons commence.
- **Distancing techniques** help to avoid embarrassment and protect privacy. Role play, case studies with invented characters, appropriate videos, etc. can help children to discuss issues in a depersonalised, safe environment.

Subject Monitoring and Evaluation

RSE teaching and learning is monitored by the Heads of RE/PSHE and Science, Assistant Head and Deputy Head during the course of our usual subject monitoring and evaluation every term in line with school policy. This includes lesson observation, checking of planning, work scrutiny, evaluating pupil assessment and feedback and subject

development is given to individual staff and in departmental meetings. On a regular basis, the implementation of the policy is monitored by the Governing body, who are also consulted when the policy is reviewed or if an amendment is required.

Dealing with questions

Clear boundaries for questioning are established and ground rules set as to what is appropriate and inappropriate; personal questions are not answered. If a teacher is asked a question that is too explicit, is age-inappropriate for the child or whole class or raises questions about sexual abuse, then it should be acknowledged with a promise to attend to it later on an individual basis. If a question is raised that alerts a member of staff that a child is at risk of sexual abuse, child protection procedures will be followed. As the range of understanding may be considerable, a three-level response to questions will be followed:

1. Answer in class for all children to hear;
2. Answer one-to-one away from other children; and
3. Refer back to parents/carers, with the child's consent, to establish their willingness to have their child's question answered.

Reflection

Reflecting is crucial for learning as it encourages pupils to consolidate what they have learned and to form new understanding, skills and attitudes. We can provide an opportunity for reflection in the RSE programme and help pupils reflect on their learning by asking questions such as:

- What was it like doing this discussion today?
- What did you learn from the others, especially those who had a different experience or belief from your own?
- What do you think you will be able to do as a result of this discussion?
- What else do you think you need to think or learn about?

Terminology

DfE guidance recommends that it is important for children to learn the language associated with body parts so that children are able to talk to health professionals. Therefore, teachers will use the anatomically correct language for body parts, while acknowledging common terms used by some people.

Confidentiality and Child Protection

In compliance with the school's Safeguarding Policy, staff can reassure children that their interests will be maintained and encourage and allow children to talk but are not able to ask leading questions in order to gain more information. Teachers must not guarantee complete confidentiality and must inform the child if information is to be passed onto another member of staff. Children should be informed of sources of confidential advice. Any concerns about child protection must be discussed in the first instance with the Assistant Head (the Designated Safeguarding Lead), or in her absence the Head. Any suspicion of sexual abuse, either now or in the past, must be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

Safeguarding and Harm Prevention

The curriculum will include age-appropriate teaching on preventing sexual harassment, sexual violence, sexism and misogyny, and how to seek support.

Policy production

This policy has been produced in line with DfE guidance and regulations (ISSRs). Consultation with staff, pupils, parents and governors has been a key part of the policy writing process. In PSHE lessons, staff listened and responded to the views of pupils, ensuring that the policy meets the needs of all pupils. The views of parents were listened and responded to via email. Staff and Governors' views were listened and responded to in meetings. The date for policy review can be seen at the end of this document. Staff, pupils, parents and governors will be part of the review process.

Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND)

At our school, teaching and resources will be differentiated as appropriate to address the needs of children with special educational needs in order for them to have full access to the content of RSE. Differentiation for children with SEND should be planned for in terms of:

- Learning objectives
- Activities
- Teaching methods
- Resources

Activities should be broken down into small steps, giving children achievable goals and enabling teachers to monitor progress. Teaching assistants should support in ways appropriate to the needs of the individual. They should also be aware of the objectives of the lesson and activity.

Withdrawal of students from RSE

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education, as it is compulsory. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the head teacher. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Equal Opportunities

At our school it is our aim to provide a RSE programme which is accessible to all our children, regardless of race, gender, ability, culture or religion. Materials and resources for lessons should be chosen carefully avoiding stereotypical images. Teaching activities are aimed to ensure that they engage both boys and girls and at times single sex groups might be appropriate.

Complaints procedure

Any complaints about the content or delivery of RSE should be addressed to the Headmaster.

Links with other documents and Policies

This policy can be read in conjunction with the school's Programmes of Study and Curriculum and EYFS Curriculum Policies.

Documents and other policies that inform this RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- DfE: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019) (Updated July 2025)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education (2025) and subsequent iterations
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- PSHE Association guidance on writing your school's relationship and sex education policy (Latest guidance)
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage [Childcare Act 2006] (September 2026 and further iterations) (**EYFS**)
- Education (Independent Schools Standards) (England) Regulations April 2026 .
- Equal opportunities etc. **Equality Act (2010)**

Policies:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Curriculum Policy

Policy Consultation

The school will proactively engage and consult parents when developing and reviewing the RSE policy. Parents will be provided with a representative sample of resources and will be able to view all materials on request.

The policy was reviewed and amended in April 2026 and was presented to staff, pupils, parents and governors for consultation between 15th May and 15th June 2026.

Policy Review

This policy is reviewed every three years.

Reviewed: April 2026

Review Date: April 2029

Headmaster: Matthew Draper

Chair of Governors: Ed Ng

Appendix 1

Learning outcomes for RSE within the school. By the end of Kindergarten, children will:

- Understand some areas in which they can look after themselves e.g. dressing and undressing;
- Understand some basic hygiene routines and explain why it is important to keep clean;
- Identify different members of the family; and
- Understand how members of a family can help each other.

By the end of Form I, pupils will:

- Begin to recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others and, by encouraging positive self-esteem, develop an appreciation of these differences;
- Know how to keep clean and look after oneself;
- Understand that babies become children and then adults;
- Know and describe the differences between boy and girl babies;
- Know there are different types of families;
- Know which people we can ask for help;
- Understand that some people have fixed ideas about what boys and girls can do and learn to challenge these stereotypes; and
- Describe some differences between male and female animals.

Through work in Science, pupils learn about life cycles of some animals, understand the idea of growing from young to old and learn that all living things reproduce. They learn about the importance of personal hygiene to maintain good health. In RSE, pupils reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved. They begin to co-operate with others in work and play and begin to recognise the range of human emotions and ways to deal with them. They also learn about personal safety.

By the end of Form II, pupils will:

- Know some differences and similarities between males and females;
- Name male and female body parts using agreed words;
- Understand the meaning of personal space and that people may require personal space;
- Understand that all families are different and have different family members;
- Identify who to go to for help and support; and
- Describe the main stages of the human lifecycle.

During Upper II and Lower III, pupils will:

- Describe how to manage physical and emotional changes;
- Explain how to keep clean during puberty;
- Understand changes in males and females in puberty;
- Know some basic facts about pregnancy and conception;
- Know when it is appropriate to share personal/private information in a relationship;
- Explain how and where to get support if a relationship goes wrong; and
- Dealing with emotional & social issues and challenges that may arise.

In Science, pupils build on their knowledge of life cycles and learn about the basic biology of human reproduction. Pupils are taught about the physical, emotional and social changes at puberty, which include personal hygiene. In PSHE they continue to develop an understanding of relationships within a family, between friends and the community and that there are different patterns of friendship. They will develop skills needed to form relationships and to respect other people's emotions and feelings. They will consider how to make simple choices and exercise some basic techniques for resisting pressures.

Appendix 2

Right to withdraw Form

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

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents *Discussion notes *What will child do during this time and where?	