



# Castlecroft Primary School

## R.S.E Policy (Relationships and Sex Education) Policy

**Head Teacher:** Mr A Dyall

**Co-ordinator:** Mrs S.Birbeck-Simpson

**Policy Adopted/updated:** May 2023

**Policy to be reviewed** May 2024

(This policy cannot be seen in isolation. It works in conjunction with our PSHE Policy, confidentiality policy, Safeguarding policy, Child protection policy and E-safety policy.)

## **CASTLECROFT PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Background Information**

Castlecroft Primary School is an above average size one form entry Primary School with a Nursery class. It provides education for 250 pupils; 124 boys and 126 girls including Nursery, and including 6 places for pupils with visual impairment who are fully integrated into the 7 classes. (These children are supported within classes by qualified VI teaching assistants who in conjunction with the class teacher adapt activities and resources for the children in their care advised by the qualified VI teacher: Mr. P.Dimmock.)

The area served by the school is one of mixed private and rented local authority housing. Pupils are however also drawn from beyond the immediate vicinity. About 10% of pupils come from a minority ethnic background and have English as an additional language. 16% of our children are on the Special Needs Register. The proportion of Pupil Premium pupils is currently 30% (including EYFS pupil premium).

### **Policy Statement/Development**

At Castlecroft Primary school we have always valued good PSHE education and therefore welcome the introduction of the new Relationships Education and Health Education statutory curriculum in Primary schools. (Additional Sex Education via PSHE is still non statutory in Primary schools.)

As part of the implementation of statutory requirements around Relationships Education, all schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships Education (and Sex Education if this is also delivered.)

Schools should ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve.

At Castlecroft, we have made the decision to teach additional, age appropriate non-statutory sex education in the interests of our children growing up in the modern world. As a school we have a history of successfully teaching these lessons as part of our Year 6 curriculum. Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education and Health Education are part of our wider PSHE (Personal, social, health and economic) education and so it is important to also read our PSHE policy and overview of lessons to fully understand our approach to this important subject. To ensure best practice, the PSHE and RSE curriculum at Castlecroft has been developed using the PSHE Association programme of study.

This policy sets out our own school approach to Relationships Education and non-statutory Sex Education. It has been updated by the PSHE/RSE leader in consultation with a PSHE advisor, Governors, Parents/Carers, the School Leadership Team and School Staff.

The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review - a working group made up of D.Wales (PSHE/RSE co-ordinator) and S.Birbeck-Simpson (deputy head) pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation - all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation - as the parent/stakeholder consultation took place during the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown parents and any interested parties were invited to watch a recorded presentation about the policy and to respond via a dedicated parent feedback email where the working group responded to parental questions and concerns.

4. Ratification - the curriculum committee (of the governing body) were involved in the review of the policy. The full governing body ratified the final policy. When reviewing the policy in future this responsibility may be delegated at the discretion of the Governing Body

The development of the policy is in line with the statutory guidance released by the Department of Education (2019), which sets out statutory content for Relationships Education for primary schools from September 2020. The statutory guidance document can be viewed here ['Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers](#)

This policy aims to provide guidance and information on all aspects of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in the school for staff, parents/carers, and governors.

### **Statutory Regulations**

As a maintained primary 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.

Under the Education Act 2002/Academies Act 2010, all schools must provide a balanced and broadly-based curriculum which:

- promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.

Other documents that inform this policy include:

- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)
- Keeping children safe in education (2020)

Current regulations and statutory guidance from the Department for Education state that Relationships Education and Health Education must be taught in all primary schools from September 2020.

**This guidance has been reviewed to ensure that our school policy and approach is in-line with both statutory requirements and established best practice.**

### **Definition of Relationships Education and Sex Education**

Relationships Education is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

Sex Education is defined as teaching children about the changes that adolescence brings and - drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived. For the purposes of this policy, we specifically identify any non-statutory Sex Education that falls outside of Science and those related elements within statutory Health Education.

Broadly, Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) is lifelong learning about personal, physical, social, moral, and emotional development. In our school it is set in the context of clear values about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love, and care, for family life.

It should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

Good RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity, rather a focus on positive and healthy relationships.

Please note, for the purposes of this policy we also define Relationships Education as any theme that is required content by the DfE within that section of the statutory document. As with all elements of the statutory requirements, this will be delivered as part of our PSHE education

programme of study. For reference, these Relationships Education themes are:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

In line with statutory guidance, for the purpose of this policy we also define any non-statutory sex education content delivered as part of our PSHE education programme. These elements offer parents a “right of withdrawal” for their children if necessary. Please see the parents' right to withdraw section later for further information.

Statutory sex education content is part of National Curriculum for Science. Please note that there is no parental right of withdrawal from the Science curriculum.

Please note that statutory Health Education, also taught as part of our PSHE programme of study, contains complementary elements of learning around topics such as body changes, puberty, menstrual wellbeing etc. There is no parental right of withdrawal from Health Education.

At Castlecroft, we believe that our pupils need to be educated in RSE themes as part of a broad and balanced curriculum which develops the whole child. By teaching all of these elements via our PSHE programme, we ensure that our pupils receive age-appropriate information in line with statutory requirements and also the aims, ethos, and values of our school

### Aims

At Castlecroft Primary School, we strive to do the best for our school community. We pride ourselves on our warm, welcoming ethos where everyone feels valued. 'Enjoy and achieve' is at the heart of our aims for our children; from their first days in our nursery to the day they leave us for secondary education, we aim to ensure that their primary years

are enjoyable, stimulating, successful and safe and are a firm foundation to their lifelong learning. We have the highest expectations of ourselves and our children and we constantly hold ourselves to account supported by our governing body who is a strong critical friend. We feel that our RSE curriculum particularly helps us to achieve these core aims of the school:

- To develop young people who are confident, independent learners with high self-esteem and high aspirations; who have experienced success and enjoyment at school.
- To provide the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences to allow children to feel part of wider society and to prepare them to make positive contributions as citizens of Modern Britain.
- To develop the knowledge, skills, strategies and resilience to enable our children to stay happy, active, healthy and safe.

In providing children with an understanding of healthy and respectful relationships and appropriate boundaries, we consider effective RSE to be a fundamental part of our approach.

We aim to develop in our pupils an understanding of the physical, biological, emotional, social, spiritual, legal, and moral aspects of relationships.

Broadly, the aims of Relationships Education (and Sex Education) at our school are to:

- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy
- Develop emotional literacy - and the emotional vocabulary necessary to be able to express their feelings - in our children
- Understand that family relationships are important and the characteristics of a healthy family life
- Recognise the importance of friendships and the characteristics of healthy friendships
- Teach that we all have a shared responsibility to stop bullying, the strategies for coping with bullying and how to ask for help
- Know the importance of respecting others regardless of differences

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help pupils understand how to recognise if relationships make them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- Know how to report concerns or abuse, including emotional, physical, verbal and sexual abuse, when they feel unsafe
- Ensure pupils are safe in the online world, including internet and social media platforms, keeping personal information private and safe

### **Curriculum content/Delivery of RSE**

As part of our PSHE education programme, Relationships Education is taught gradually across Key Stages 1 and 2, so that learning can be built upon in a way that is appropriate to the age and maturity of each child and enables them to successfully manage the challenges they face as they grow up.

Additional non-statutory sex education is taught in year 6 and consists of:

- An age-appropriate understanding of sexual intercourse
- Conception
- Birth of a baby

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other related aspects are included in religious education (RE) and Health Education (as part of PSHE).



The RSE programme will be delivered by teachers through PSHE lessons, which are timetabled weekly in themed units.

Pupils in Key Stage 2 also receive sessions supported by the school nurse service:

Year 4- Boy and girls puberty changes

Girls -menstruation

Year 5- Menstruation and the female reproductive system

The male reproductive system

The school nurse also supports the non-statutory sex education lessons in Year 6-Sexual intercourse

Conception

The birth of a baby

Staff are sensitive to the needs of individual pupils. For certain aspects of the statutory RSE programme, where it is regarded as beneficial, or more appropriate to learning and asking questions children may be divided into single gender classes for some lessons.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Discussion and group work
- Emotional intelligence - the ability to express their feelings and to understand the feelings of others and take these into account
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making

- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising an active, healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict

These skills are taught within the context of school life, family life and the wider community.

For further information on our RSE curriculum (growing up and relationships) please see the PSHE topic overview. See appendix.

A range of interactive and engaging teaching methods which involve children and young people's full participation are used to teach RSE. These include whole class discussions and debates, collaborative learning, role play and independent work.

High quality resources are used to support our RSE provision and will be regularly reviewed so that we provide a framework in which children and young people can develop their knowledge, skills, attitudes and understanding about RSE topics and themes.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

#### **Governing board:**

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

#### **Head teacher:**

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, in line with this policy, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.

#### **Staff:**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE

- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

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 head teacher and PSHE coordinator. Staff can be supported to deliver RSE via training and by other members of staff if needed.

### **The PSHE co-ordinator Mrs Birbeck-Simpson:**

- Oversee the day-to-day operation of the school's RSE provision
- Contribute to delivering or organisation of training where necessary
- Liaise with outside agencies e.g. school nurse service, visitors etc.
- Ensure that appropriate resources are available for the teaching of RSE
- Develop, review, and monitor the teaching of RSE and the school policy as requested by the Head teacher
- Report to governors/SLT on the subject as required
- Provide letters to parents to inform them of what will be taught
- Arrange specialist support for SEND pupils where necessary through Outreach or the Nurse team

### **Pupils:**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Children are also expected not to discuss their lessons with any younger children.

### **Creating a safe learning environment**

RSE can be a sensitive topic for many pupils and teachers. To get the most out of RSE sessions it is important that a safe learning environment is created. This is achieved in various ways at Castlecroft such as endeavoring to provide a male and female member of staff to be available to the children when RSE is taught in single gender groups. In RSE lessons an 'ask it basket' (anonymous question baskets) is school policy for all questions. This will help pupils to discuss any sensitive issues and help teachers manage these accordingly.

Ground rules are essential to provide an agreed structure to answering sensitive or difficult questions. During PSHE/RSE lessons and discussions staff will establish clear ground rules with pupils to ensure that children feel safe, listened to and supported. As part of this process staff will always re-visit the school's confidentiality rules (see confidentiality policy).

### **Managing questions**

During both formal and informal PSHE/RSE sessions, pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Any questions arising from pupils are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned, and if the teacher delivering the session deems it appropriate to answer (guided by this policy and the PSHE curriculum overview).

Teachers will:

- use specific ground rules for this work which will clarify boundaries for children/young people, and mitigate disclosures in class
- clarify that personal questions should not be asked
- clarify that pupils should not give out personal information in class but speak to someone they trust after the lesson, e.g. school nurse, teacher, pastoral staff.

Teaching staff will endeavour to answer questions as openly as possible. All questions will be answered via the 'ask it basket' system and where questions are raised which are beyond our curriculum children will be encouraged to speak to their parents. The school believes that individual teachers must use their professional judgement, skill and discretion in

this area (guided by this document and the school curriculum) and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned.

Children may also be signposted back to parents/carers who have ultimate responsibility in talking to their children about sensitive matters. We will also encourage parents to talk with school if they have any questions or queries, and if they would like advice on how to better support their child.

### **Confidentiality & Safeguarding**

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue during PSHE/RSE sessions or to other staff after sessions. This will be followed up and dealt with in line with our school safeguarding policy.

Whilst teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence, children are informed that teachers cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality if they or someone else may be at risk of harm.

### **Pupils with Additional Needs**

As with all other Curriculum areas, we seek to ensure equality of access for our children with special needs, to the same educational opportunities as those available to the rest of the population. In order to make use of these opportunities, it may be necessary to enhance the curriculum and resources available to pupils with special educational needs. Where necessary the PSHE lead will contact Outreach and the Nurse team for specialist advice and support with teaching. SEND children have an entitlement to a broad, balanced curriculum, which is relevant to their needs and which is delivered in a differentiated way. Our SEND children and our visually impaired (VI) children will have activities and resources adapted by SEND support staff, VI support staff and teachers. For pupils on an EHCP plan advice may be sought from relevant involved agencies on how best to support the learning.

Since much of this subject area demands teaching involving group and whole class discussion, care must be taken to promote equality of opportunity-that discussion is not for the few by the few. The establishing of class 'Guidelines for discussion' at the outset is of great benefit in this but the teacher must always try to be aware of the different levels of participation in discussion work and actively promote maximum participation. However as a school we respect every pupil's right to pass in a discussion that they feel uncomfortable joining in with.

### **Equality and Inclusion**

The school is committed to the provision of RE, RSE and PSHE Education to all of its pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups but there may be occasions where pupils with Special Educational Needs are given extra support from SEN support staff.

Staff are aware that views around RSE related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE is taught without bias and in line with legal responsibilities such as those contained within the Equality Act (2010). Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect others that may have different opinions so that they are prepared for life in modern Britain. The personal beliefs and attitudes of staff delivering RSE will not influence the teaching of the subject in school.

However RSE is taught, it is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity, rather an understanding and acceptance of the diverse relationships that exist in our school community and beyond.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

We feel that RSE is an important part of a child's development and

believe that all of the content within our school's PSHE/RSE & Health Education curriculum is of the utmost importance and relevance to all pupils, including any additional non-statutory elements.

**We fully support the fact that parents have the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all non-statutory sex education lessons.**

**As per the DfE guidance document, there is no parental right of withdrawal from Relationships Education or Health Education content within the school curriculum, or from any statutory Sex Education which forms part of the National Curriculum for Science. This includes lessons on puberty and menstruation.** These are statutory requirements which the DfE mandates schools to teach; please see the statutory document if further information is required.

**Parents who wish to withdraw their children from non-statutory sex education sessions, as designated within our PSHE plan, should make a request via the head teacher or deputy head teacher in the first instance. (These are the lessons in year 6 on sexual intercourse, conception and birth of a baby)** The deputy head teacher will discuss the request with parents to explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child and will share lesson resources and plans with the parent to reassure them about how Sex Education is taught.

If parents still wish to withdraw their child from these designated Sex Education lessons, then this request will be recorded, and suitable alternative arrangements will be made for pupils during relevant lessons in another class. Parents should also understand that the decision to remove their child from these lessons means that they themselves will assume responsibility for talking to their children about any related sex education themes covered outside of National Curriculum Science.

We aim to provide parents and carers with accurate information about what their child is learning in school and to provide the best learning environment and opportunities for our children. We always welcome dialogue with parents about the content of our RSE programme and how we can best support them to engage with their children on these topics.

## **Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of our continuing professional development calendar and RSE lessons are supported by the most recently trained member of staff.

The head teacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or PSHE/RSE professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE to ensure effective practise.

## **Monitoring arrangements**

The planning and co-ordination of the teaching of RSE is the responsibility of the PSHE subject leader, who also:

- Supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in the subject, and by providing a strategic lead and direction for PSHE/RSE:
- Evaluates the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, and indicates areas for further improvement.
- Uses specially allocated, regular management time to review evidence of the children's work and to observe PSHE lessons across the school.

The quality of teaching and learning in PSHE is monitored and evaluated by the subject coordinator as part of the school's agreed cycle of lesson observations. Please also see the 'monitoring and review' section in our school PSHE policy.

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

## **Dissemination**

The policy will be distributed to all teaching and non-teaching members of staff. Copies of the policy document are available to all parents via the school's website. A hard copy of this policy can also be obtained free of charge via the school office if required.

## **Review**

The RSE policy will be reviewed regularly by the PSHE coordinator, Head teacher and Governors of the school.



