

Understanding Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education:

A guide for parents and carers

As part of a high-quality **Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE)** scheme, schools have always aimed to deliver accurate, relevant and age-appropriate information about **Relationships** – one of the three core strands of PSHE and Citizenship (the two other being **Health and Wellbeing** and **Living in the Wider World**). At Starbeck Primary Academy, we have been following the national recommended guidelines for many years.

From September 2020, the government is making it **statutory** for all primary age children to be taught **Relationships and Health Education** in order to enable children to grow up healthy, happy, safe, and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. The Sex Education strand remains **non-statutory**.

The term 'relationships' covers all relationships we, as humans, have with others – e.g. family members, friends or the relationships children have in school with their peers and members of staff. In a broad sense, Relationships Education encompasses all interactions we have with others.

These subjects are designed to equip your child with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The world for all young people looks very different from the way it did 20 years ago when this curriculum was last updated – these changes bring the content into the 21st century, so that it is relevant for your child.

Relationships Education

Relationships Education will put in place the building blocks needed for positive and safe relationships, including with family, friends and online.

Health Education

Health Education aims to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

What we cover in Relationships and Health Education

Full details of the age appropriate coverage are in the RSE policy which is available on our website however the key aspects include:

In the early years (Nursery & Reception) children will begin to

- develop a positive sense of themselves and others
- develop respect for others
- develop an awareness of similarities and differences between people

In the KS1 (Years 1 & 2) children will learn more about topics such as:

- bullying and unkind behaviours
- the importance of families and friends
- different family structures

- being kind and treating others with respect
- being safe on and off-line

In the KS2 (Years 3-6) children will build on prior learning and also cover learning on:

- teamwork
- healthy and unhealthy relationships including on-line
- the different types of relationships people have with others
- resolving conflicts
- peer pressure and dares

By the end of primary school your child will have been taught content on-

Relationships Education-

- *families and people who care for me
- *caring friendships
- *online relationships
- *being safe

Health Education-

- *mental wellbeing
- *internet safety and harms
- *physical health and fitness
- *healthy eating
- *Facts and risk associated with drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
- *health and prevention
- *basic first aid
- *changing adolescent body including puberty

An inclusive approach to Relationships Education

Teaching children about the differences among humans has always been considered an important message in education. Just as schools want to encourage children to celebrate their many different talents, strengths, goals and dreams, they also aim to promote diversity among cultures, religions and traditions. The diversity among family structures and relationships is the same principal and a whole-school approach is vital.

It is expected that all Relationships units of work in schools will be inclusive and representative of relationships and family structures in modern Britain. What we teach is tolerance and acceptance in line with British values. OFSTED fully support the notion that children will be taught about differing family structures and relationships, promoting acceptance and respect for differences from a young age.

Your right as a Parent or Carer

The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum. Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up.

Right to withdraw your child

You **cannot withdraw your child from Relationships or Health Education**. It is important that all children receive this **statutory** content. The changing adolescent body including puberty is part of the statutory Health Education.

You **do have** the right to request that your child be withdrawn from some or all of **Sex Education** delivered as part of statutory RSE. Please note that should the school intends teaching aspects of Sex Education, parents/carers would be notified in advance with details about the content. Any parent/carer wishing to withdraw their child from some or all lessons on **Sex Education** should firstly contact the headteacher. This will then be followed up by a sensitive meeting to discuss your concerns.

RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly advise parents/carers to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. It is acknowledged, however, that the final decision on the issue is for the parents/carers to take and the child and family should not be stigmatised for the decision. This meeting will be documented, and a record will be kept.

It is a partnership between school and families to support pupils knowledge and understanding about these healthy and normal parts of growing up and becoming an adult. As a school we will provide additional support in these areas if parents/carers feel they need it.

The Science curriculum in all maintained schools does also include content on human development, including reproduction. The science curriculum is **statutory** and there is therefore no right to withdraw a child from science lessons.

RSE Policy

A new school RSE Policy has been written in order to clarify to all of our children and stakeholders at Starbeck Primary Academy, that we deliver a bespoke curriculum that meets the needs of our children.

The policy by law is posted on our school website along with the planned curriculum. The school wants parents/carers and pupils to feel assured that RSE will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of pupils, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the RSE provision.

If you have any questions or concerns, then please contact the school and ask to speak to the PSHE Leader or a senior member of staff. They will be able to deal with any queries and provide specific information on the curriculum objectives and content as well as the resources used to teach.

For further information please see-

Department of Education-Relationships, Sex and Health Education: guides for parents

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-sex-and-health-education-guides-for-schools>