



RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

What is relationships and sex education (RSE)?

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) helps pupils understand the emotional, social, and physical aspects of growing up, healthy relationships, sexuality, and sexual health. It is taught through science and Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE). RSE complements PSHE learning on topics such as anti-bullying, online and offline safety, physical and mental wellbeing, substance awareness, and key life skills including communication, resilience, risk management, peer pressure and decision-making. These lessons reflect the school's values of compassion, courage, and respect—encouraging pupils to treat others with empathy while having the confidence to speak out against inappropriate or abusive behaviour.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education (RE) compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education (Reception – Year 6) and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education (Years 7 & 8 at Hazelwood). Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continue to be compulsory in independent schools. The DfE published revised guidance in July 2025, which comes into effect from September 2026. The school will make any necessary changes over the course of the year to reflect the latest updates. Hazelwood is also committed to complying with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and DfE Guidance 'Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024'.

A comprehensive programme of RSE (or simply RE in Key Stage 1 and the majority of Key Stage 2) provides building blocks of accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building healthy, positive, enjoyable, respectful, and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline. RSE empowers all children to recognise and report abusive behaviours. It is inclusive of all, including those with a special educational need or disability (lessons will be differentiated as appropriate and appropriately fosters equality and respect between genders, faiths, the LGBT community, and other protected groups. Furthermore, pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress. The RE or RSE programme is delivered by Form Tutors in Years 1-4 and the Head of PSHE in Years 5-8.

Our Relationship and Sex Education Policy:

- Defines relationships and sex education.
- Sets out an agreed approach to RSE in the curriculum and can act as a tool to help in future decision-making.

- Clarifies the School's intended outcomes for its RSE provision.
- Informs and reflects practice by detailing the content covered and methodology used to enable learning in RSE.
- Describes how RSE is provided and who is responsible for providing it.
- Describes how RSE is monitored and evaluated.
- Includes parents' right to withdrawal.
- Will be reviewed annually.

In reviewing our Relationships and Sex Education Policy we will:

- Show willingness to consult with parents and to keep them informed.
- Show readiness to take into account different religions and faiths as appropriate, as with any other protected characteristic under The Equality Act.
- Feel confident in responding to the community's concerns.
- Support teachers by explaining the School's Policy and practice through training, staff meetings and contact with the Head of Department.
- Aim to formulate a policy which acknowledges and respects the values of the community.

Definition

RE and RSE will be age-appropriate, building knowledge and life-skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face. They will focus on:

- Different types of healthy relationships, including friendships, family relationships and, when appropriate, intimate relationships,
- How to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries, and consent, and how to manage conflict, and how to recognise unhealthy relationships,
- How relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health,
- Healthy relationships and safety online,
- Factual knowledge, when appropriate, around sex, sexual health, and sexuality, set firmly within the context of relationships.

RSE is part of the basic school curriculum and integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum. At Hazelwood School, we aim to ensure that children grow up able to enjoy the positive benefits of loving, rewarding and responsible relationships. We are committed to our pupils being informed and comfortable with the changes during puberty as well as being sexually healthy and emotionally safe. RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but helps build children's self-esteem whilst teaching the importance of consent, and the need to respect themselves and others.

Context

We recognise that parents/guardians are key figures in helping their children cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings. The education offered by Hazelwood School should be seen as complementary and supportive of the role of parents/guardians.

How RSE is provided and responsibilities

Whilst it is recognised that RSE can be a difficult issue, which places specific demands on our staff, the purpose of RSE should be to provide knowledge about loving relationships, the nature of sexuality and the processes of human development and reproduction. At the same time, it

should lead to the acquisition of understanding and attitudes which will prepare our pupils to view their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

In order to achieve this:

- RE and RSE at Hazelwood School is taught through 'Personal, Social, Health and Economic' education lessons from Years 1-8 and in science lessons (see Appendix).
- The provision of RSE is progressive in terms of language, concepts and content increasing in depth and complexity as pupils progress through the School.
- The RSE delivered should be tailored not only to the age, but also to the understanding of pupils, and may, therefore, vary in detail year on year. Guidance is taken from the PSHE Association, which provides the Medway Scheme of Work, which forms the basis for the sexual health lessons.
- It will be set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law regarding sexual behaviour.
- Pupils will be encouraged to appreciate the value of committed stable and healthy relationships and the responsibilities of parenthood, understanding that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children (single parents, LGBT parents, adoptive parents, for example). Such matters will be treated with sensitivity and great care will be taken to ensure all pupils feel a sense of worth and part of a safe and respectful environment. Care will be taken when issues such as marital breakdown and divorce are dealt with or families with young carers.
- A clear programme of RSE has been agreed with the Senior Management Team and Governors prior to implementation, and delivery will be monitored by the Head of PSHE. Detailed information relating to PSHE and RSE is shared with parents at the start of each year.
- The Policy will be reviewed annually.
- The RSE programme will be delivered when appropriate. Teachers delivering the lessons will gauge the maturity and readiness of the pupils and adjust their lessons accordingly.
- The Head of PSHE will evaluate the programme and make recommendations for modification as appropriate. Topical news, worldwide awareness events, or ad hoc pastoral issues the Head of Year or school would like to raise within a particular year group are addressed in an age-appropriate way in PSHE lessons.

At Hazelwood School our aim is:

- To provide information and knowledge which will challenge preconceptions.
- To help pupils to consider the importance of dignity, respect for themselves and for others, acceptance of responsibility, and sensitivity towards the needs and views of others.
- To promote necessary skills for effective communication, loving, caring and happy relationships, and positive behaviours.
- To enjoy relationships based upon mutual respect, consent and responsibility which are free from abuse and exploitation.
- To develop and understand gender identity and sexual orientation.
- To develop an understanding of risk and to promote strategies for personal safety.
- To enable pupils to be aware of sources of help and to acquire skills and confidence to use them.

The main RSE objectives for each year group can be found in the Appendix.

The Parental Right to Withdraw their Child from RSE Lessons

In line with DfE Guidance, 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education' (2019), parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all elements of sex education following consultation with the school. Relationships education does not involve explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity but can cover sensitive topics such as sexual violence in order to keep children safe. The right to withdraw children applies only to sex education not relationships or health education. Sex education at Hazelwood is taught in Year 6 (how a baby is made), Year 7 (sexual consent), and Year 8 (sexual consent and contraception). These topics to which this right applies is made clear to parents in RSE information letters, sent out in advance of RSE lessons starting, and details how parents can withdraw their children.

In addition, at Hazelwood School

- It is considered vital for parents/guardians to be informed prior to delivery of RSE.
- It is realised that, under exceptional circumstances, a very small number of parents may wish to exclude their children from this programme. In this case, such parents should contact the Head of PSHE.
- RE and RSE at Hazelwood School is taught through PSHE lessons from Years 1-8 and in science lessons within the School.

Advice to Individual Pupils

- It is understood that it is important to distinguish between the School's function of providing education generally about sexual matters and the giving of advice to individual pupils on these issues.
- Good teachers have always taken a pastoral interest in the welfare and well-being of their pupils. It is also understood that this function should never trespass on the proper exercise of parental rights and responsibilities.
- It is understood that particular care must be exercised in relation to giving contraceptive advice to pupils under the age of sixteen, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful. It is the general rule that giving an individual pupil advice on such matters without parental knowledge or consent would be inappropriate.
- Where the circumstances lead the teacher to believe that the pupil has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place him or her at moral or physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher has the general responsibility to ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice.
- Where the circumstances indicate that a safeguarding issue has arisen teachers should take advice and then follow the School's established safeguarding protocol.

Advice to Hazelwood Staff

- Teachers should agree with the ground rules for class discussions recognising the sensitivity of the work and the discussions likely to arise. This Policy should minimise any embarrassment the pupils may feel and will discourage inappropriate personal disclosure.
- Teachers should create and establish an atmosphere in which pupils value each other's contribution and develop respect for one another.
- Teachers should not promise absolute confidentiality.
- Teachers should establish the key rule that 'we do not talk outside the classroom about personal matters which may be mentioned by other people in the lessons.'

- Any disclosures must be handled sensitively with the teacher adhering to the School's safeguarding procedures.
- Teachers must be sensitive to pupils for whom the concept of a stable committed relationship does not apply.
- Teachers must avoid giving negative messages about sex, sexuality and relationships.
- Teachers should encourage pupils to ask questions, and they should answer them openly and honestly within the bounds of appropriate responses.
- If a question arises which requires any individual responses or information which is personal in nature, then teachers should not respond in a whole-class setting but to the individual as appropriate. Hazelwood School staff are advised to take advice in these circumstances and for another member of staff to be present when this information is given to the individual concerned.

Appendix

Here are the main RS/RSE objectives for each year group are communicated via letters to parents in advance, along with the complete list of PSHE objectives for their respective child. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from lessons.

Year 1	• how people make friends and recognise if someone is lonely • recognise and use the correct names for the main parts of the body, including external genitalia (also forms part of Health Education) • recognise that some parts of the body are private and how to respond if someone makes us feel uncomfortable • that we do not keep adults' secrets, including techniques for resisting pressure and what to do if we feel unsafe • what is kind and unkind behaviour, and that hurtful behaviour is unacceptable
Year 2	• how to listen to others and share opinions • understand that families may look different to our own and how we may be the same and different to others • know there are situations where we should ask for permission • recognise and use the correct names for the main parts of the body, including external genitalia (also forms part of Health Education) • recognise that some parts of the body are private and how to respond if someone makes us feel uncomfortable • that hurtful behaviour is unacceptable and basic techniques for resisting pressure
Year 3	• recognise the different types of relationships that might be important to people • recognise and respect that there are different types of family structure • the importance of friendship and strategies for building positive friendships • listen and respond respectfully to those with different opinions • recognise if a friendship (online or offline) is making us feel unsafe • the impact of bullying, including offline and online, and the consequences of hurtful behaviour • demonstrate strategies for solving arguments with peers
Year 4	• to recognise the importance of self-respect and how this can affect our thoughts and feelings about themselves • that people may be attracted to someone emotionally and romantically of the same sex or different sex to them • to recognise if a friendship (online or offline) is making us feel unsafe or uncomfortable • recognise what puberty is, including when and why it happens (also forms part of Health Education) • identify some of the physical changes that happen to bodies during puberty • use scientific vocabulary for external male and female body parts, including genitalia (also forms part of Health Education)
Year 5	• the different ways a couple can show commitment to each other and that forced marriage is a crime • strategies to respond to hurtful behaviour, what discrimination is and how to challenge it • about privacy and personal boundaries, recognise different types of physical contact and what is acceptable and unacceptable

	• about seeking and giving permission (consent) in different situations, about keeping something confidential or secret • identify some of the feelings experienced during puberty and why emotions can change (also forms part of Health Education) • explain where to get help and support for managing puberty (also forms part of Health Education) • use scientific vocabulary to describe body parts, including genitalia (also forms part of Health Education) • explain what happens during menstruation (periods) and what is meant by a wet dream (also forms part of Health Education) • identify body parts or areas to keep clean during puberty and how to keep them clean (also forms part of Health Education) • describe ways of managing physical changes during puberty, including the use of products (also forms part of Health Education)
Year 6	• respect the differences and similarities between people • explain the importance of mutual respect in a close relationship • describe some of the features of loving relationships • to listen and respond respectfully to a wide range of people • describe how a baby is made and what is meant by consent • describe the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty (also forms part of Health Education)
Year 7	• about different types of relationships and the qualities of positive, healthy and unhealthy ones • how the media portrays relationships and the impact of this on people's expectations • about the law relating to sexual consent • that consent is freely given; that being pressurised, manipulated or coerced to agree to something is not giving consent • develop conflict management skills and strategies to reconcile after disagreements • to recognise bullying and its impact, and about the unacceptability of prejudice-based language and behaviour • strategies to manage the physical and mental changes that are a typical part of growing up, including puberty and menstrual wellbeing (also forms part of Health Education)
Year 8	• how to manage the breakdown of a relationship • that marriage is something that should be entered into freely • the characteristics of abusive behaviours, such as grooming, and about the unacceptability of prejudice-based language and behaviour • recognise that sexual attraction and sexuality are diverse • the impact of sharing sexual images without consent • how to seek and withdraw consent, and if consent is not given, that decision must be respected • the purpose and different forms of contraception, how and where to access contraception and an introduction to the risks related to unprotected sex

Science Reproduction

Year 3 Topic: **How does your garden grow?** (Term 3)

a) Reproduction in flowers

- b) Pollination
- c) Plant cycle

Year 5 Topics: **Circle of Life** (Term 3) and **Growing up and Growing old** (Term 3)

- a) Flowers
- b) Pollination
- c) Metamorphosis
- d) Animal life cycles
- e) Starting a new life – (human life cycle)

Year 6 Topic: **We're Evolving** (Term 2/3)

Year 7 Topic: Genetics and Reproduction

- a) DNA
- b) Flower reproduction
- c) Human reproduction

At a timely point in Year 8, children will label parts of the male and female reproductive systems, learn about the fertilisation of an egg and sperm cell, and describe labour and birth.

Topics relating to physical and mental health and wellbeing are taught within other PSHE lessons and across the curriculum in other subjects such as Science, ICT, PE and Games.

Basic First Aid is a compulsory elective in Year 7 or 8 and children in Years 5-8 learn basic lifesaving skills in PSHE lessons at the start of each year.

Ratified by the Education Committee via email on 13 November 2025