RSE Policy

Contents:

Introduction 2
Definition 2
Relationships Education and the law 2
Right to Withdraw 3
Children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities 3
RSE within the PSHE curriculum 4
Questions 6
Involving Parents and Carers 7
Staff training 7
Monitoring and Evaluation 7
Review of the policy 7

Introduction

Thomson House School believes that throughout their primary school life all children should acquire understanding, skills, knowledge and positive beliefs and attitudes about relationships, feelings, sexuality and sex. THS is a non-denominational, fully inclusive school which understands and values family life alongside stable and loving relationships. The school's values of Curiosity, Kindness and Courage help to promote this ethos and underpin the curriculum. Thomson House School believes that it is important for young children to be introduced to Relationships and Sex Education in a safe and secure environment at school.

The curriculum is also underpinned by oracy – effective teaching of RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain happy, trusting and meaningful relationships. It also enables young people to talk about any issues, thereby enhancing an ability to make responsible, informed decisions and choices, both now and in the future.

The teaching of RSE contributes to promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. It also aids the mental and physical development of pupils at school. It forms part of the wider PSHE (Personal Social Health Economic) curriculum.

This policy was written in conjunction with the parents, Governors, senior leaders, staff and pupils at Thomson House School as well as the school nurse and other associated professionals and is in line with the DfE statutory guidance https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

Definition

Relationships and Sex Education is the lifelong learning about positive and trusting relationships; physical changes and growth; and moral and emotional development in the way individuals relate to each other. It is about teaching an understanding the importance of stable, loving relationships, including marriage, that value respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, sexual health and of birth.

Relationships Education and the law

This policy is written in line with the Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025). The guidance will be introduced from 1 September 2026 and this policy will be implemented and reviewed in light of that timetable. The policy should also be read alongside Keeping Children Safe in Education and the SEND Code of Practice.

This policy should be read in conjunction with Keeping Children Safe In Education (2026); and the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 year olds (2014)

THS understands that, according to the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). THS will also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for RSE.

Teaching of RSE will reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that children clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.

Right to Withdraw

THS is aware that parents have the right to withdraw their child/ren from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education, Health Education or the science curriculum.

Parents should put withdrawal requests in writing to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will hold a meeting with the parent within 10 school days where possible to discuss the content, the reasons and the likely impact. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child. Any withdrawal will be recorded on the pupil's file and noted in the school's central RSE withdrawal log. The pupil will be offered purposeful alternative education during the withdrawal period. We will ensure that parents understand what was due to be covered in the RSE sessions and provide relevant resources for the parents to cover these topics at home, if they choose to.

Where a pupil has SEND, the Head Teacher will consider the pupil's needs carefully when agreeing a withdrawal and will involve relevant staff (SENCo, DSL) in the discussion to ensure the approach is appropriate for the child's development.

THS is a non-denominational school. However, the school understands that some families at school may hold religious beliefs. The religious background of all pupils will be taken into account when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content are appropriately handled. THS will ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

Children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities

RSE at Thomson House School is accessible for all pupils. The teaching of RSE will be differentiated and personalised in line with the needs of pupils. THS is mindful that it has a duty to prepare children for their next stage of education, and for the transition towards adulthood.

However, THS is also aware that some children with SEND may be vulnerable and therefore may need explicit teaching of healthy relationships above and beyond that of non-SEND pupils. The school will aim to provide for each child, taking their individual needs into account. As with all subjects, THS will ensure that the teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

The Right to Withdraw applies to all pupils, including those with SEND. Please see the notes above in relation to discussions with the Head Teacher regarding the right to withdraw a pupil from Sex Education. The Head Teacher will take a pupil's specific needs into account when making this decision alongside the parents.

RSE within the PSHE curriculum

At Thomson House School the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education will take place within the Personal, Social, Health & Economic weekly lessons. THS follows the Jigsaw PSHE programme.

Curriculum decisions and language used in lessons will reflect the statutory guidance and the Equality Act. Where the guidance provides specific framing for sensitive topics (for example how biological sex and related legal rights are presented), the school will follow DfE wording and advice and will ensure teaching is age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate.

Class teachers will teach RSE lessons as part of the PSHE curriculum in the Spring Term. The children will be taught in mixed gender and mixed attainment classes. Parents will be given notice in the first half of the Spring term and resources will be shared at a parent workshop well before the lessons begin.

Further details can be found on the school's website . The children's prior knowledge is assessed by class teachers, misconceptions are dealt with, and scientific vocabulary is taught.

The focus in school is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

Pupils are taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. Pupils are taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Pupils are taught about establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at secondary.

Teachers will talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts will enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them and to know who to turn to for help.

The curriculum is divided into categories as follows:

1. Families and people who care for me - Pupils will know:

• that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
• the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
• that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
• that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
• that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
• how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

2. Caring friendships - Pupils will know:

• how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
• the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
• that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
• that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
• that there is no shame in feeling lonely or discussing those feelings.
• how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

3. Respectful relationships - Pupils will know:

• the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships and set boundaries.
• the conventions of courtesy and manners.
• the importance of self-respect and self-esteem and how this links to their own happiness.
• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority.
• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
• what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
• the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

4. Online relationships - Pupils will know:

• that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
• that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
• the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
• how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
• how information and data is shared and used online.

5. Being safe - Pupils will know:

• what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
• about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
• that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
• how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
• how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
• how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
• how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
• where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Questions

Primary-age pupils will often ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality which go beyond what is set out for Relationships Education. Teachers will follow agreed ground rules and will not promise absolute confidentiality. If a pupil disclosure indicates a safeguarding concern the teacher will follow the school's child protection procedures and immediately inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Where external visitors deliver sessions, plans and resources must be provided to the school in advance. The PSHE lead will check materials for suitability and safeguarding risks. Visitors will be supervised and DBS-checked as required, and the school will agree in writing how any safeguarding concern raised by a pupil during a session will be handled. Staff will be trained to manage sensitive questions in line with the latest KCSIE and RSHE guidance.

If a question is outside of the age-appropriate curriculum, the teacher will not answer the question directly but will inform the pupil that the question will be answered and fully explained at some point in the future.

Ground rules are established by the teachers for these lessons – for example, being respectful of the ideas of others, sharing thoughts and concerns, showing empathy to others, showing respect to others' questions and not asking personal questions.

Involving Parents and Carers

At Thomson House School, we believe that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the cohesive and impactful delivery of our RSE curriculum. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss the RSE programme through:

• Annual Parent/carer workshop delivered by the Head Teacher

• Parents'/carers' evenings

• Information leaflets/displays as appropriate

From 1 September 2026 parents and carers have a statutory right to view the resources used in RSE lessons on request. Thomson House School will:

- make lesson resources available on request within 5 school working days and/or via a dedicated area of the school website
- hold an annual parent/carer workshop delivered by the Head Teacher
- offer to meet to talk through resources where parents request this;
- provide alternative resources or materials for parents who withdraw their child from sex education sessions. Requests should be made to the Head Teacher or PSHE lead.

Staff training

All staff who deliver RSE will receive annual CPD and briefings before delivery of the sex education modules. The PSHE lead will keep training records and link training to safeguarding updates in KCSIE and to the RSHE July 2025 guidance. In addition, opportunities are provided for staff to identify individual training needs on a yearly basis and relevant support is provided.
The Head Teacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The PSHE lead (Ros Williams) and Designated Safeguarding Lead (Ros Williams), alongside the wider Senior Leadership Team will monitor the delivery of RSE and PSHE. Monitoring will include:

- termly planning checks by the PSHE lead
- at least one learning walk or lesson observation per year focused on RSE
- termly analysis of pupil voice feedback for progression and safety
- an annual written report to the Local Academy Committee including numbers and reasons for withdrawals and any safeguarding trends arising from RSE delivery.

The PSHE lead will maintain the RSE resource register and the withdrawal log.

Review of the policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Local Academy Committee, after consultation with the parents, senior leaders, School Nurse, staff and pupils at THS.

Date: October 2026

Date for review: October 2027