



Snowflake School

‘Improving the quality of family life’

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- 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
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

2. Statutory Requirements

At Snowflake School, we teach Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education in accordance with our duties under the Children and Social Work Act 2017. As an independent school, we must provide Relationships Education to all primary-aged pupils, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to all secondary-aged pupils under Section 34 of the Act. Under Section 35, we must also provide Health Education to all pupils.

We are not required to follow the National Curriculum; however, all pupils are taught science, which includes the statutory biological elements of sex education such as puberty, the human body and reproduction.

The Department for Education published revised statutory guidance, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), in July 2025. This updated guidance becomes mandatory from September 2026, and Snowflake School is working towards early implementation to ensure pupils receive current, accurate and safe education.

In line with the SEND Code of Practice (2015), local authorities must ensure that the EHCP Annual Review from Year 9 onwards focuses on Preparing for Adulthood, including employment, independent living, health, friendships and relationships, and community participation. Snowflake School supports this statutory duty through its PSHE and RSE curriculum.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Behaviour
- Online Safety
- Equality
- SEND
- Spiritual Moral Social and Cultural Development and Promoting British Values
- Quality of Education
- PSHE

RSE is delivered in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and the Independent School Standards (Part 3: Welfare, Health and Safety)

3. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

RSE planning is individualised and linked to EHCP outcomes, particularly within the Preparing for Adulthood framework (relationships, community participation, independence, and health). Targets are adapted to each pupil's cognitive profile, communication needs, and safeguarding risk level.

We take into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1-3.

4. Delivery of RSE

RSE is delivered as part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum at Snowflake School. Biological components of RSE are taught through the Science curriculum, in line with statutory requirements. Teaching is adapted to ensure accessibility for pupils with autism across the Bulb, Branch and Blossom pathways.

Relationships Education focuses on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive, safe and healthy relationships, including:

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

For further detail, see Appendix 1: RSE Curriculum Content.

RSE content and timing of delivery across the academic year may be adapted for individual pupils in response to developmental needs, EHCP outcomes, safeguarding considerations, or communication profiles. RSE is delivered through:

- PSHE lessons
- Science lessons
- Circle Time
- PE and physical development sessions
- 1:1 session delivered by tutors during NET (Natural Environment Teaching), self-help sessions and community learning

- Incidental teaching opportunities embedded within daily routines and structured communication programmes

If a safeguarding concern or disclosure arises during RSE, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and report immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.

All content is taught using evidence-based ABA/VB strategies, visual supports, modelling, repetition and generalisation opportunities, ensuring that pupils understand concepts in meaningful, functional contexts.

Teaching takes place within the context of family life, recognising and valuing the diversity of family structures. Staff take care to avoid stigmatisation and to reflect sensitively the wide range of backgrounds our pupils may come from, including single-parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive and foster families, and those with looked-after children or young carers.

Throughout delivery of RSE, teachers will be mindful of the law and ensure that pupils are not exposed to or encouraged to engage in illegal activities. This includes ensuring that teaching does not condone or promote:

- violent or extremist behaviour
- hate crime
- criminal damage
- terrorism
- illegal use of drugs
- harmful or unsafe sexual behaviour

Content will always be factual, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, and underpinned by safeguarding principles.

As a specialist autism provision where all pupils have EHCPs, the school recognises that pupils may be at increased vulnerability to exploitation, coercion, grooming, and misunderstanding of social and sexual boundaries. RSE therefore places a strong emphasis on explicit teaching of consent, personal safety, public and private behaviours, and recognising unsafe situations, in a highly structured and developmentally appropriate manner.

As a secondary provider, Snowflake School also delivers the statutory content on *Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health*. This content is taught in a highly personalised, adapted and safeguarding-led way, with a strong emphasis on bodily autonomy, consent, recognising unsafe or unhealthy relationships, private and public boundaries, and understanding the law. Not all pupils will access all elements of this content; teaching is differentiated according to developmental stage, communication profile and EHCP outcomes. In accordance with statutory guidance, parents/carers may request withdrawal from the non-statutory sex education elements of RSE.

Inclusivity

At Snowflake School, RSE is delivered in a way that reflects the diverse needs, experiences, and communication profiles of all pupils. We ensure that teaching is:

- Respectful of individual differences, including disability, neurodiversity, culture, faith, gender identity, family structure and personal background
- Sensitive to pupils' lived experiences, recognising that some may find certain topics challenging or emotionally activating
- Developmentally appropriate, focusing on what each pupil *understands*, not only their chronological age
- Supportive and safe, creating an environment where pupils feel secure, valued and able to engage with key messages

To ensure this, we deliver RSE in the format that best meets each pupil's needs, including:

- Whole-class teaching, where appropriate
- Small-group learning, using structured, visual and differentiated materials
- Targeted sessions for pupils requiring additional support or pre-teaching
- 1:1 instruction, using ABA/VB strategies, visual aids, modelling and social stories
- Digital, interactive or visual formats, where these support comprehension and engagement

We give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed, adapting vocabulary, resources, pace, sensory load, and teaching methods to ensure that every pupil can access the content meaningfully. Staff use structured teaching, repetition, generalisation opportunities and alternative communication approaches (e.g., PECS, AAC, signing) where needed.

Our aim is to ensure that all pupils receive RSE in a manner that is inclusive, personalised, accessible and safe, enabling them to learn about relationships, safety and health in ways that are relevant, respectful and empowering.

Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

5. Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils.

Staff Delivering RSE

All 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/carers wish them to be withdrawn from 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 headteacher.

All staff delivering RSE receive regular training appropriate to their role, including:

- Safeguarding and child protection (including KCSIE updates)
- Delivering RSE to pupils with autism and SEND
- Managing disclosures and sensitive topics
- Teaching consent, boundaries and personal safety
- Trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming approaches

Ongoing supervision, coaching and modelling are provided to ensure consistent, safe and developmentally appropriate delivery using ABA/VB strategies.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

6. Parents' right to withdraw

Primary School - Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education. Secondary School - Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from

Safe Understanding Patient Enthusiastic Respectful

components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 4 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

Parents/carers who choose to withdraw their child will be encouraged to provide appropriate sex education at home, and the school can provide materials to support this.

7. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery and impact of RSE is monitored through:

- Lesson observations (1:1, small group and class-based sessions)
- EHCP progress reviews and annual reviews
- Safeguarding monitoring and incident analysis
- Curriculum scrutiny and PSHE/RSE folders
- Pupil voice (where appropriate to communication level)
- Staff supervision and competency reviews
- Parent/carer feedback and multidisciplinary input

Pupils' views, experiences and responses are considered when reviewing and developing the RSE curriculum. Staff use appropriate communication approaches to gather pupil feedback and identify areas where further support or teaching may be needed.

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

This policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher annually.

The Board of Trustees approve the RSE policy and monitor its implementation through safeguarding and curriculum oversight, ensuring compliance with the Independent School Standards and statutory RSHE guidance.

Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Any safeguarding concerns disclosed during RSE will be managed in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

Appendix 1: Relationships and sex education curriculum map

PSHE - LONG TERM PLAN (2-year cycle)

	Autumn A	Autumn B	Spring A	Spring B	Summer A	Summer B
Year 1	<p>Myself and others (RSE – friendships, personal space, trusted adults) <i>SA1, WIL1</i></p>	<p>Healthy Lifestyles <i>HL3, SSS1</i></p>	<p>Jobs People Do <i>WIL2/WIL5</i></p>	<p>Safety (RSE – safe behaviour, identifying trusted adults) <i>SSS2/4</i></p>	<p>Accessing the Community <i>WIL3/4/5, SSS5</i></p>	<p>Relationships (RSE – friendships, kindness, sharing) <i>SA2/3/5</i></p>
Year 2	<p>People who are special to us (RSE – family, trusted adults, relationships) <i>CG4, SA4</i></p>	<p>Physical Health <i>HL2</i></p>	<p>Trust (RSE-Safe vs unsafe situations, understanding private body parts (developmentally appropriate)) <i>CG3, SSS3</i></p>	<p>Feelings (RSE – recognising and expressing emotions) <i>MF1/2</i></p>	<p>Healthy Eating <i>HL1</i></p>	<p>Changing & Growing (RSE – body changes, privacy, personal boundaries, growing up) <i>CG1/2</i></p>

Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should have engaged with and explored

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect 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
Online relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Appendix 3: By the end of secondary school pupils should have engaged with and explored

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents/carers with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • 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 people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 4: Parent/carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carer		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/carers	

Revision

Version Update	June 2026
Review due	July 2027
Reviewed By	Mariam Polad
Approved by Board of Trustees on	June 2026