



Sedbergh

PREP AT CASTERTON

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY	
Version	2025-26
Effective from	September 2025
Extent of Policy	Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School
Policy Owner	Senior Deputy Head
Review by	June 2026
Governor	Richard Biggs
Frequency of Audit	Annual
Circulation	Staff & Parents
Publication	Website

POLICY CONTEXT AND RATIONALE

This policy covers Casterton, Sedbergh Prep School's (the "School's") approach to RSE. It was produced by the Senior Deputy Head, through consultation with the Headteacher, Deputy Head (Academic), Head, Head of PSHE and parents.

The School understands its obligation to teach RSE as part of the revised statutory guidance from the Department for Education. This will comprise of Relationships Education for pupils up to Year 6, and Relationships and Sex Education for pupils in Years 7 and 8.

Documents that inform the School's RSE policy include:

- [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Behaviour in Schools \(advice for headteachers and school staff\)](#)
- [Equality Act 2010 and schools](#)
- [SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Alternative Provision \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying\)](#)
- [SMSC requirements for independent schools \(guidance for independent schools on how they should support pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development\)](#)

Parents and carers will be informed about the policy through annual communication from the Senior Deputy Head. The policy is available to parents and carers through the School website. If you require this policy in any other format, please contact hmpa@sedberghprep.org

RSE is an important and necessary part of all pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It is formally taught through PSHE lessons but will also be informed by assemblies and other forums.

RSE begins at a very early age and, while much of it is learnt from parents, it is also received from friends, books, magazines, television, internet, music, films and so on. Some of this information can be incorrect, confusing or downright frightening. RSE in School provides a secure framework and environment in which pupils can be given the facts, using appropriate materials. It also allows them to develop necessary personal skills and a positive attitude to physical and emotional health, wellbeing and moral development.

Wide-ranging research has shown that children want information about changes and situations they will experience *before* they happen to them. A safe, supportive and structured programme in School increases the probability of this being achieved. Also, although children want to be able to discuss hormonal changes and relationships with their parents, many parents and children prefer the School to take a lead and provide a springboard for the discussion. A partnership between home and School and open dialogue between parent and child are the ideal.

A successful programme, firmly embedded in the School’s PSHE will help children learn to respect themselves and others and allow them to move, with confidence, from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

POLICY AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This policy is informed by the School’s ethos and values, which include the aim of developing happy, confident children with a ‘can-do’ attitude, independent yet always with a sense of team before self. Through careful and sensitive teaching, we aim to foster a spirit of adventure, both inside and outside the classroom.

Our RSE programme has the following intended outcomes:

Years 1 – 6

<p>Families and people who care for me</p>	<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
<p>Caring friendships</p>	<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.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
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.

Years 7 & 8

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. • 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
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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. • what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
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.
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressuring others. • how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Active engagement in learning, rather than passively receiving information, is most effective in teaching PSHE education. Pupils will have opportunities to consider and clarify their values and beliefs, and to rehearse and develop enquiry and interpersonal skills.

This policy ensures they will receive a comprehensive, balanced and relevant body of factual information to inform their present and future choices.

CURRICULUM CONTENT

The curriculum overview can be found on the School’s website, [[here](#)]. However, the School may adapt lessons in response to observed themes or patterns of behaviour.

CURRICULUM DELIVERY

PSHE and RSE need to consider pupils’ starting points. Pupils will bring differing levels of knowledge and understanding to any issue explored through these lessons. Often this prior learning is more complex than we might assume. Where possible, any new topic in PSHE education should start by determining pupils’ prior knowledge. (This will also enable teachers to make more effective judgements about pupils’ development and progression in learning). Circle time, role-play, and discussion can play an important part in this.

Research shows that attempts to scare or shock young people into making a healthy choice rarely work and can indeed 'backfire', by inadvertently creating excitement, curiosity or even status among pupils who accept the risk. This does not mean that potential consequences of the lifestyle choice should not be made clear, but balance is important. For example, young people frequently overestimate how often their peers take part in risky behaviours and feel that they are the 'odd ones out' if they do not do the same. It is important that they are reassured that the majority of young people actually make positive, healthy lifestyle choices.

It is important that pupils are helped to make connections between the learning they receive in RSE and their current and future 'real life' experiences. The skill of critical reflection is therefore at the heart of assessment for learning in RSE.

PSHE is timetabled weekly for pupils in Reception to Year 8. The Form Tutor is generally timetabled to take these lessons in Year 6 and below, but some classes may be taught by the Head of PSHE, where necessary. The Head of PSHE takes all lessons for Years 7 and 8. On occasions, whole year groups or the whole School may have PSHE sessions, delivered by an outside speaker or organization. Our provision is further enriched by material covered in assemblies or through sessions timetabled outside the normal PSHE timetable, such as Form Periods.

CREATING A SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Because PSHE and RSE works within pupils' real-life experiences, it is essential to establish a safe learning environment.

Clear ground rules need to be established to ensure a safe learning environment. Occasionally, where appropriate, whole year groups, or the whole School may be involved in the delivery of particular topics, and, again, these are designed to ensure a safe learning environment, delivered by experts in their field.

In the course of PSHE and RSE lessons, pupils may indicate in some way that they are vulnerable or 'at risk'. There are clear links here with the School's Safeguarding Policy, and all staff therefore have clarity about what is required in such circumstances.

Due to the nature of RSE, pupils' learning may result in them seeking advice or support on a specific personal issue. Teachers cannot offer complete confidentiality; it is important for everyone's safety that teachers and pupils are clear about what can and cannot be kept confidential. It is also very important for external contributors, including School nurses, to be clear about these rules and that whilst working in the classroom, they are bound by the School's confidentiality policy.

More information can be found in the School's Safeguarding Policy.

It is also important that pupils feel able to ask any questions that they wish and that their questions are valued. However, consideration should be given to how to respond to questions.

If necessary, teachers should feel able to ask a pupil to wait for an answer to give them time to consult with the School's SMT if they feel this appropriate, or if the question raises potential safeguarding concerns. (For instance: 'That is a really interesting question and I need time to think because I want to give you a proper answer.')

Teachers should feel able to work with colleagues if necessary, to construct an appropriate answer.

INVOLVING PARENTS AND CARERS

Legislation states that parents in Years 7 and 8 have the right to withdraw their children from aspects of sex education provided as part of RSE, which are not part of the Science curriculum. The PSHE Policy and RSE Policy can be found on the School website together with the PSHE Scheme of Work; both fully accessible to parents. Equally, the School will provide a written copy to any parent on request.

The Senior Deputy Head will invite feedback on the curriculum content and communicate the right to withdraw from Sex Education to parents in Years 7 and 8 on an annual basis; any requests of this nature will lead to a meeting to fully understand the wishes of the parent / carer and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. See Appendix 1.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parent / carer request to withdraw the child. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education in Year 6 and below, or any other part of the PSHE programme of study, since these form the fundamental building blocks of safe and healthy relationships through school and adult life.

ENTITLEMENT AND EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

We promote the needs and interests of all pupils, irrespective of gender, culture, language, SEND or personal circumstance by taking these differences into account, and adjusting lessons and delivery where necessary to enable all pupils to access the learning. We expect our pupils to consider others' needs by addressing these issues directly and appropriately in PSHE lessons, ensuring equality for all.

We recognise the right for all pupils to have access to PSHE education learning which meets their needs through working closely with the Learning Support department where necessary.

RESPONSIBILITIES

ACTION	BY WHOM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review this policy on annual basis. 	Senior Deputy Head
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schemes of Work for each topic, including signposting of relevant and up-to-date resources based on the PSHE Curriculum Overview 	Head of PSHE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PSHE Curriculum Overview and scheduling of Assembly themes 	SMT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of PSHE Programme, science and computer science 	Timetabled staff

APPENDIX 1: LETTER TO CSPS PARENTS REGARDING PSHE AND RSE

Dear Parent

Each year it is my duty to write to you and invite comment upon the scheme of work for our Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). This feedback will be considered as we review the curriculum on an annual basis.

In Years 7 and 8 **only**, there is a statutory requirement to teach sex education as part of this curriculum but parents have the right to withdraw their child should they wish. Any such requests would first lead to a meeting with myself to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and if you still wish to withdraw your child we would ensure that they receive appropriate and purposeful education in its place.

The various documents can be found on our website [\[link\]](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this.

Yours sincerely

Nick Goligher

Senior Deputy Head