

Achieving Success Together



Mill Green School

RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Policy Status:	STATUTORY
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Issue Date:	December 2024
Review Date:	December 2025

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Introduction and Statutory Requirements

“SRE [RSE] is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings” (Sex Education Forum 1999)”.

Effective relationship and sex education (RSE) promotes spiritual, moral, social, cultural, emotional, mental and physical development and is key in enabling young people to make informed life choices confidently, and furthering their respect for themselves and others as they move through life. It should equip them with information, skills and positive values to: have safe, fulfilling relationships, enjoy their sexuality and take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. RSE involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. It is about respect, love and care and the benefits of making and maintaining healthy stable relationships.

As a maintained 14-19 special school, we must provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as per the *Children and Social work Act 2017*.

The Wider Agenda

RSE forms part of the wider agenda of promoting positive relationships and sexual health for young people to which individuals and organisations in our community contribute. We believe the provision of high quality RSE supports us in fulfilling other statutory duties.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in *Section 403 of the Education Act 1996* which requires that schools ensure sex education encourages pupils to consider moral considerations and family life, and protects them from inappropriate materials.

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in *Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996*.

The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024) sets out our responsibilities for safeguarding

The provision of RSE supports the understanding of safeguarding issues, appropriate strategies for students, and where and how to access support. This provision lets students know in a non-

personal way, that there is support available, giving them the confidence and reassurance to make disclosures.

Issues of Domestic Violence, Peer on Peer violence, Forced Marriage, FGM, Sexual violence and Harassment are delivered in an appropriate manner for their age range.

*For more procedural information, please refer to the Safeguarding policy

The Equality Act 2010 describes our duty to ensure that teaching is inclusive for all students

This policy has due regard for the Equality Act. Our teaching of RSE is applicable to all sexual orientations and will include teaching aspects of sex and sexual health. It is also a key means through which we promote Fundamental British Values (democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance with those with different faiths and beliefs) such as tolerance and acceptance of other sexualities.

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

- Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development (SMSC) Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Alcohol, Smoking, Drugs and Substance Abuse Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy for Students
- Behaviour Policy
- Exclusions Policy
- School Behaviour Policy
- Science Policy
- Confidentiality Policy

Intent and Aims

Mill Green is committed to ensuring that every pupil has the opportunity to receive a comprehensive, well-planned programme of RSE which is inclusive to all regardless of sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender or religion. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle and to care for and respect their bodies, and we aim to provide them with tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

RSE is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is understood and effectively retained by the pupils in our care. This includes emphasis on good health, the value of self-esteem in making choices and judgements, the nature of healthy and consensual relationships, and knowledge about how the body works, all within a context of moral issues and values. We recognise that to be human is to experience sexual feelings, seek connections with other people and develop relationships which may be physical or non-physical.

RSE is particularly important for young people with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities. Our students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues and such factors will be taken into consideration when designing and teaching our RSE curriculum.

Our work in RSE is set within the wider context of our school values and ethos and all staff work towards achieving these aims for RSE in our school. We seek to enable our learners to:

- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and develop a moral framework that guide decisions, judgements and behaviour.
- Develop interpersonal and communication skills.
- Develop assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media.
- Understand sexual feelings and behaviour, so that they can lead fulfilling enjoyable lives.
- Lead a healthy, safe lifestyle, teaching them to care for, and respect, their bodies.
- Understand that good nutrition and appropriate exercise supports a positive physical, emotional and mental health, including positive self-esteem.
- Understand attitudes and skills needed to maintain their physical and mental health.
- Develop an understanding of risk and to promote strategies for personal safety
- Access factual knowledge around sex, sexual health and sexuality, set firmly within the context of relationships.
- Develop awareness of their sexuality; understand human sexuality; challenge sexism/prejudice, homophobia and transphobia and promote equality and diversity.
- Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and friendships.
- Be accepting of different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender identity, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them.
- Possess the skills and tools to seek information or support, should they need it.
- Understand consent and their right to say no.
- Be able to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.
- Be prepared for puberty and adulthood in Modern Britain.

We will achieve these aims by:

- Promoting a healthy, safe and caring environment for all pupils and staff.
- Providing a broad and balanced curriculum, which values diverse backgrounds and needs.
- Promoting pupils’ self-esteem and emotional wellbeing.
- Helping pupils to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, at school, at work and in the community.
- Preparing our pupils to confidently engage with the challenges of adult life.
- Providing sufficient information and support to enable our pupils to make safe choices.
- Complementing and being supportive to the role of parents and have regard to parents’ views about its content and presentation; and ensure students have the information to make informed, healthy and safe life choices.
- Providing a bespoke curriculum which is age and developmentally appropriate and differentiated to the needs of all pupils.
- Presenting information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner.
- Providing information and knowledge which will counteract prejudice and ignorance.
- Teaching lessons that are sensitive to a range of views, values and beliefs.

Implementation

RSE should be a continuous process of learning about physical, moral and emotional development which begins before young people enter our school and continues into adulthood. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity, or any lifestyle and our curriculum covers

issues affecting young people today in a modern, media rich, technological age. It involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. We provide our learners with an age appropriate RSE programme tailored to their physical and emotional maturity.

Entitlements

We, together with our community partners, are committed to working towards the implementation and development of the following entitlements.

Young people are entitled to:

- Accurate, useful and appropriate information delivered in a way that meets their individual needs
- A well-planned, well-delivered, flexible RSE programme, which caters for changing needs.
- Know where and how to access information, support and local services
- Be informed about issues of confidentiality and how it affects them
- Have their views and ideas received in a respectful and non-judgemental manner
- Be involved in developing and evaluating the content of their RSE programme.

Adults working with young people are entitled to:

- Access to high quality, up-to-date, accurate information, resources and training
- Mutual understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to the planning and delivery of RSE
- Contribute their views and ideas in support of the development of RSE
- Professional guidance and support
- Opportunities to share good practice
- Be informed about issues of confidentiality and procedures to be followed.

Parents, carers and other adults in the community are entitled to:

- Accessible, accurate, up-to-date, information delivered in a way which meets their needs
- A safe and supportive environment for their children
- Information on how and when RSE is taught
- Understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to RSE policy and curriculum
- Be informed about issues of confidentiality and how it affects them and their children
- Have their views and ideas received in a respectful, non-judgemental manner.

Curriculum Planning

Our RSE Curriculum is consistent with the National Curriculum (2014), DfE and OfSTED guidance. It also reflects best practice described by the Sex Education Forum and PSHE Association. We will review our curriculum, as guidance on statutory RSE is announced. We consult parents/carers and pupils both on what is included, and on how it is delivered. This helps pupils and their families to establish what is appropriate and acceptable for them.

At Mill Green RSE is carefully planned and delivered primarily through PD and PfA in a spiral curriculum from year 10 through to year 14 allowing pupils to re-visit topics and build knowledge and skills over time. Topics and lessons are carefully sequenced, within a planned scheme of work, and where relevant are linked to other areas of the curriculum. Some aspects of RSE feature across several topics, yet discrete RSE topics are also planned and delivered, giving full

consideration to the timing of this as related to the age and emotional maturity of our pupils. Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size and teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations. This is supplemented by the pastoral curriculum revisiting themes and current issues in assemblies, pastoral tasks, and enrichment activities.

Curriculum Content

Our RSE programme (through PD & PfA) will seek to develop pupils' personal and social skills as well as their attitudes and values alongside the knowledge and understanding elements. Pupils will learn to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice, developing self-respect and empathy for others, and developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made. Through our PD and PfA programme, the education of our pupils will include the following:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values
- Learning the value of family life, and stable, loving relationships for the nurture of children
- Learning the value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as a part of decision-making (for example, understanding the impact of an online world has on healthy relationships, exploring the issue of online pornography).
- Consider the importance of self-restraint, dignity, respect for themselves and for others.

Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- Develop self-respect and empathy for others
- Learning to make choices based on understanding difference with the absence of prejudice
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- Managing conflict
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- Promote skills in reviewing the impact and influence of the media and pornography.
- Develop the skills to stay safe in an increasingly sexualised society.
- Develop skills to raise self-esteem and assertiveness in order to resist pressure and coercion interims of sexual relationships.
- Build on internet safety awareness and skills to stay safe online in using mobile technology
- Develop the skills for healthier safer lifestyle;
- Promote acceptable and appropriate behaviour in public and private situations;
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship issues.
- Communicate with trusted adults to keep themselves safe
- Explore skills needed for effective parenting and how to assess one's readiness to be a parent
- Encourage the development of social skills and strategies to reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse.
- Have the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.

- Recognise relationships (including family) that are unhealthy/abusive (unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence including honour-based/forced marriage)
- Make pupils aware of strategies to manage unhealthy or abusive relationships or how to access support for themselves or others at risk.
- Raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, especially in their relationships with others.
- Develop and maintain healthy, fulfilling relationships including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent, with peers and family
- To understand the consequences of actions and behaving responsibly within relationships.
- Enable students to maintain healthy, fulfilling relationships, both on and offline which are free from abuse and exploitation.
- Develop and use communication/assertiveness skills to cope with influences of peers and media

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages
- Learning to use appropriate language to describe body parts and functions
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learn about contraception and STIs, and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Learning the reasons for and the benefits of delaying sexual activity
- Understanding of the law as it relates to all aspects of RSE inclusive of, but not exclusively: marriage, consent, CSE, pornography, FGM and equality.
- Understand the meaning of and laws around consent and the legal position regarding 'sexting'
- Be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary.
- Develop understanding of the risks of using social media and/or the internet for sexual purposes including the dangers of viewing pornographic material.
- Recognise risks, harmful content/contact, and how/when to report issues to stay safe online.
- Have a clear understanding of sexual and reproductive biology, including knowledge of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases.
- Physical, hormonal and emotional factors linked to puberty, reproduction, pregnancy and birth.
- Recognise all types of families and to explore the different methods for starting a family
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or pressured into unwanted/unprotected sex.
- Understand the importance of consent; how to give, withdraw, ask for and recognise consent
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex, how to have protected sex and how different types of relationships might require different forms of protection.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections.
- Enable pupils to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications, and risks, of certain types of behaviour and to accept that both sexes should behave responsibly in sexual matters
- Allow pupils to explore the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- Understand the benefits of healthy relationships to mental wellbeing and self-respect and understand that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on wellbeing.
- Understand all types of relationships, such as friendships, family, dealing with strangers and intimate relationships, including LGBT relationships as directed by the Government guidelines.

- Recognise emotions associated with loss or change within a relationship, such as divorce, separation and new family members and manage them positively or know where to seek help.

RSE teaching should:

- be age-appropriate
- be developmentally appropriate
- be evidence-based
- be mindful of the religious backgrounds of pupils
- be inclusive, regardless of pupils' developing sexuality or sexual identity
- identify laws in England which relate to the subject content.

Teaching Methodologies

It is important that we are able to demonstrate strong levels of engagement within PD and PfA lessons in order to meet the key outcomes. In order to foster this engagement, RSE lessons should contain a variety of learning activities aimed at promoting dialogue between students to further their understanding and engagement. Teaching strategies may include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion
- project learning
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings

To ensure Relationships and Sexuality Education is meaningful and engaging for pupils, we adopt a learner-centred approach to facilitate and guide learning. We employ an enquiry-based approach when exploring sensitive and complex issues, and use participative methodologies. Pupil-centred, participatory approaches are essential if pupils are to consider values, attitudes and behaviour. Whilst specific knowledge may be transmitted through didactic teaching methods much of the teaching programme will be based upon the active involvement of pupils. We ensure there are positive educational reasons for each method of delivery.

RSE is delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Approaches such as distancing techniques and use of classroom question boxes (encouraging pupils to use their names) will allow pupils to raise issues or ask questions which they may find embarrassing. Teachers ensure that pupils' views are listened to and encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. The personal privacy of young people should be respected, and all pupils should have the right to withhold their opinion or experiences with regard to a topic that is particularly sensitive for them. Throughout the school, pupils learn how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively and how important positive interactions and connections with others are for good mental health.

Ground Rules

Ground rules contribute to effective safeguarding, they are developed and shared with pupils as best practice. Ground rules establish and maintain a safe learning environment which is important for good learning to take place. They help to ensure discussions and personal questions/comments are managed appropriately and sensitively, along with those questions which are more challenging.

Ground rules may cover areas such as:

- Appropriate use of language
- The asking and answering of personal questions
- Strategies for checking or accessing information.

Specific ground rules or a Working Together Agreement will be established at the beginning of any RSE work, in addition to those already used in school. E.g. of a Working Together Agreement:

- To be kind to each other;
- To listen to each other;
- To respect our rights to share different views;
- To take care with information we share about ourselves;
- To remember that we can always ask about things in private with an adult in school, but the adult may have to share information if they are worried about our safety;
- Not to ask personal questions.

Single-sex/gender groups

Our policy is sensitive to the needs of different groups. Groups are carefully considered by teachers and senior leaders (including the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate) - some classes may be taught in gender-specific groups, on a one to one basis or within a whole class setting - dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, the cultural, religious or personal background of pupils, their age and ability. Male and female pupils may be taught together however working in single-sex/gender groups can considerably ease concerns about RSE, and help to ensure that pupils receive the RSE to which they are entitled. Single-sex/gender groups help boys and girls to feel safer and less embarrassed about airing issues and discussing relationships.

Roles and responsibilities

The school governing body will approve our RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. This Policy describes the governors' views on how RSE will be delivered in addition to requirements of the National Curriculum. It is the responsibility of the governors to ensure, through consultation, that the Policy considers the views of parents and the community. It is the responsibility of governors to ensure that the Policy is made available to parents. In order to facilitate this process, the Policy will be reviewed as required on the agenda of governors' meetings.

The Headteacher

The head teacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing any requests to withdraw pupils from sex education components of RSE. The head teacher is also responsible for ensuring that any young person who was previously withdrawn from sex education but wishes to receive it during the 3 terms before they turn 16 is provided with sex education.

PD Lead

The PD Lead is responsible for planning and delivery of RSE within PSHCE and the mapping of RSE across the curriculum. They are responsible for ensuring that the curriculum meets the statutory requirements and that the materials/resources used are age appropriate and accessible, reflecting the aims of RSE at Mill Green. They are also responsible to providing training and support opportunities for staff.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' cultural and faith backgrounds
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE, as with any other subject
- Monitoring learning in order to ensure they make progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the sex education 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 seek support.

We regard it as the shared responsibility of all adults working in the school to respond appropriately to a young person's request for information and advice. All staff are encouraged to access support from colleagues where necessary.

Pupils

- Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity, as they would be expected to in any other lessons.
- We involve young people in the evaluation and development of RSE in ways appropriate to their age and ability.

Working with Parents/Carers and our School Community

It is through effective communication between all stakeholders that our PSHE and RSE programme will continue to have the most effective impact on our pupils.

The school recognises that parents are their child's first educator and key figures in supporting their children through the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and relationships education. We recognise that many pupils would prefer to receive information about RSE from their parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of young people at our school, through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

The PSHE curriculum plan is published each year on the school website so parents can access information on when RSE is being delivered to their child. The school will also consult parents regularly on the content of the Sex and Relationships Education programme and invite parents

to view SRE resources. Parents may then wish to contact the school to discuss the curriculum and have any concerns addressed. At our school we want parents and pupils to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both age and development of pupils. This teaching is not intended to replace advice or guidance which is ideally received at home, but to supplement and broaden knowledge and understanding. The school will ensure that parents are informed of their legal right to remove their child from SRE sessions if they wish.

Parents Rights to Withdraw

Mill Green follows the guidance as laid out DfE guidance parental right to withdraw their child from RSE.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before their child turns 16. After this point, if their child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Parents should also be aware that, through other subjects such as English, Drama and History, controversial issues may come up and therefore require a certain amount of discussion. Within this category, as long as any discussion takes place within the context of the subject, it will not be deemed to be part of the sex education programme and therefore not subject to parental right of withdraw

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from these classes, they are asked to discuss it, in the first instance, with the PD lead. This will then enable all parties to be clear about what the student will do when withdrawn. It should be made clear, however, that if students who are withdrawn from sex education ask questions at other times, these questions will be answered honestly by staff. The school will make alternative arrangements for children whose parents/carers withdraw them, which will include supporting parents in finding ways to deliver the content at home. We will enable parents wishing to withdraw pupils from non-statutory elements of RSE to develop their understanding the learning objectives and approaches taken. Parents/carers will be asked to reconfirm their decision in writing to withdraw as appropriate and a record of any pupils withdrawal will be held on file.

Safeguarding

We recognise that because effective RSE may alert pupils to what is appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour, there is increased possibility that a disclosure relating to abuse may be made. All staff are aware of Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures and will report the disclosure to the designated person for child protection immediately. In our school we allow pupils an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Learners will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any reports will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

We recognise young people are capable of abusing their peers and that peer on peer abuse can manifest in different ways, including on-line bullying, sharing inappropriate images, initiation/hazing (an activity expected of someone joining/participating in a group that humiliates, degrades, abuses or endangers them, regardless of a person's willingness to participate) and inappropriate/harmful sexual behaviours. Through RSE we will teach pupils the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. This will be delivered by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This will also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. At all stages it will be important to balance teaching pupils about making sensible decisions to stay safe

(including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child or young person who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality can mean very different things to different people:

- Pupils need to know who they can go to for help, who they can trust and that, within boundaries defined by our safeguarding policies, their confidences will be respected. Fear over lack of confidentiality remains one of the biggest deterrents to young people seeking help. Children and young people want to be able to speak in confidence about their anxieties and troubles. Young people often tell a friend first about problems they are experiencing, including abuse, but often their friends do not know how to help them.
- Parents need to know that the school will always have the best interests of the children as their priority, that it will involve parents as much as possible, respecting the parenting relationship and the culture and beliefs of families.
- Teachers and other staff need to be clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional responsibilities to pupils. This will allow them to maintain an ethos of confidentiality and mutual respect in the school and classroom. This is especially critical nowadays as schools take on new roles within schools' health and relationship and sex education programmes.
- Governors need to be seen to work in a way that protects the confidentiality of pupils and staff and reinforces respect for privacy throughout the school. They also need to be able to address the issue of confidentiality when developing policies such as the schools RSE policy.
- Professionals, such as school nurses, are bound by their professional codes of conduct when offering advice and guidance to individual pupils. This often involves offering a greater level of confidentiality to children than school staff are able to give. However, in a classroom and other teaching situations when they are contributing to our planned RSE programme, they will follow the school's Confidentiality Policy. Health professionals will ensure that children are aware of the boundaries of confidentiality when beginning work with them.

It is vital that everyone working within a school is clear about the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities so that they can all work together to ensure the best interests of the pupils. In our school we have a clear and explicit Confidentiality Policy, which is shared with staff, pupils and parents/carers. This policy is communicated on the school website.

The policy states that:

- Staff are unable to offer absolute confidentiality.
- We will reassure young people that staff will act in their best interests and that this may involve sharing information if they or others at risk of harm.
- Young people will be told if information is to be shared and will be offered appropriate support.

The teacher will generate a teaching environment in which pupils respond to each other sensitively with a considerate and tolerant approach. Care should be taken to make explicit the importance of confidentiality and the limits of any such confidentiality negotiated within the class. The way in which the issue of confidentiality is handled within a school will be seen by staff, pupils and parents as an indicator of respect for and value given to the needs and wishes of each individual.

Disclosures

The nature of RSE means that pupils may disclose personal information that staff will respond to appropriately. The classroom is never a confidential place to talk, and that remains true in RSE. Pupils will be reminded that lessons are not a place to discuss their personal experiences and issues, or to ask others to do so, through the establishment of ground rules.

Techniques used to minimise the chance of pupils making a disclosure in an RSE lesson include:

- depersonalising discussion
- puppets
- using role play to ‘act out’ scenarios
- appropriate video extracts (streaming, TV or DVD)
- case studies with invented characters
- visits to/from outside agencies

In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 (KCSIE) and the protocols set out in our safeguarding policy all staff are aware of what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected. Staff are also aware of need to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those that need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and social care. A member of staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this is not in the best interests of the child. The involvement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) will ensure that trusted, high quality local resources are engaged, links to the police and other agencies are utilised and the knowledge of the any particular local issues it may be appropriate to address in lessons.

If a pupil tells a health professional, such as a school nurse, something personal on a one-to-one basis outside of the classroom, our confidentiality policy will help us decide whether that person can keep that information confidential, or whether they need to seek help, advice, or make a referral. We will also signpost pupils and their families, where appropriate, to on and offline community, health and counselling services so pupils know where to go for confidential help and advice.

Controversial or Sensitive issues

We recognise that because of the nature of the subject, sensitive and controversial issues are likely to arise. These may be matter of maturity, of personal involvement, of illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. They may include, for example, abortion, emerging gender identity, sexuality and sexual abuse. It must be recognised that young people may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity and all pupils should feel

that the content is relevant to them and explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner.

Such issues are dealt with within the framework of the aims of the school and of the Relationships and Sex Education policy as a whole. Any cause for concern will be dealt with in accordance with our pastoral systems and safeguarding arrangements. The governors believe that children are best educated, protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme.

Sensitive Issues addressed within the taught Programme:

Issues addressed within the taught programme	Sensitive topics that may arise
Physical and emotional changes through puberty	Pornography
Managing changing relationships with family and friends	Rape
Physical and sexual relationships	Paedophilia
Contraception	Emergency contraception
Assessing risks, sexual activity	Pornography, rape
Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDs	Stereotypes
Parenting	Teenage parents
Sexuality & Gender	Homosexuality Transgender
Child Sexual Exploitation	Grooming
Pregnancy & abortion	Under age sex
Loss and change, eg divorce, bereavement	Suicide
Marriage	Forced marriage
Masturbation	Pornography

In order to desensitise these issues and enable discussions to take place, staff should make use of:

- Ground rules
- Our moral and values framework
- Distancing techniques e.g. create a character, story boarding
- Specialist support where appropriate e.g. school nurse, Theatre in Health Education
- Regular CPD opportunities to attend and to discuss issues openly

Care is taken to ensure there is no stigmatisation of any pupil based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some young people may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after child or young carers. Teaching about different families is part of RSE and we aim to reflect the broad range of experiences amongst pupils and ensure all pupils feel their family is valued, such as: single parent families; recently divorced parents; parents who are married, parents who are not married, parents who have non-monogamous relationships; lesbian, gay or bisexual parents; young people living between two homes; in foster homes; in residential homes and living with relations other than biological parents. We will emphasise the importance of strong and supportive relationships, including marriage (both heterosexual and gay) and civil partnerships, for family life and bringing up children.

Supporting Young People who are at Risk

Young people need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities for discussion of what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may well lead to disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse, they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated safeguarding lead immediately.

RSE lays the foundations for developing empathy and understanding between girls and boys, young men and young women. Pupils should be encouraged to consider the importance of equality and respect within friendships and relationships, and to develop positive, non-violent behaviour. Steps are taken to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and we provide an environment which challenges sexual violence and harassment as well as perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other protected characteristic.

While men and women can be both victims and perpetrators, evidence shows that girls are disproportionately likely to experience pressure, coercion or violence from boys and men. They should learn to recognise physical, sexual and emotional violence and how to get help if they need it. RSE must provide a clear message that violence and exploitation are always wrong, that everyone is responsible for their own behaviour and that no one is ever responsible for the violence or abuse they experience.

Terminology

Pupils are taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang and everyday terms used in social situations will be covered as part of the discussion about what is and what isn't acceptable language to be used. Our use of the anatomical terms for body parts helps to ensure that children are able to describe abusive behaviours if they need to. We will alert parents as to when anatomical terms are likely to be used in class. However, we might need to use the terms at other times, such as when dealing with incidents of misuse or disrespectful language.

Respectful Language

The use of respectful language which challenges sexism, homophobia and other forms of prejudice will be established in RSE but will have benefits for the whole school community, both in and out of lessons; it helps to ensure we are a happy and healthy place to learn. Homophobic and transphobic references and homophobic and transphobic actions and bullying are not tolerated in school and are challenged and dealt with as part of our commitment to promoting inclusion, gender equality and preventing bullying. Developing the correct terminology will be a key part of teaching to make it clear that everybody uses common words and so avoid using prejudiced or offensive language.

Dealing with Questions

Group/pupil-based discussion are a key element in assessing the pupil impact of a PSHE/RSE session. All pupil questions are welcomed and encouraged; however, it is made clear that no-one should feel compelled or pressurised into asking or revealing any further personal information that they do not feel comfortable with. The answers that are provided by the relevant member of staff should always remain age-appropriate, factual and objective.

The nature of RSE may mean that sensitive questions are occasionally asked. If controversial questions are asked, the teacher will use professional judgement about how to answer them and pupils will be allowed to raise anonymous questions if preferred. Wherever possible, the curriculum planning provides further guidance and support in helping staff to address these areas. Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a young person's questions hints at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

Teachers will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. Below are guidelines the school encourages:

- If a question is too personal, the teacher will remind the pupil of the ground rules. If the pupil needs further support, the teacher can refer her or him to the appropriate person, such as the pastoral team, school nurse, helpline, or an outside agency or service;
- If a teacher doesn't know the answer to a question, the teacher will acknowledge this, and suggest that the pupil or teacher or both together research the question.
- If a question is too explicit, feels too old for a pupil, is inappropriate for the whole class, or raises concerns about sexual abuse, the teacher will acknowledge it and promise to talk to the pupil about it on an individual basis. To maintain trust and respect the teacher must remember to talk with the pupil at the first opportunity and if concerned that a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, they will follow the school's child protection procedures.
- Pupils will be enabled to write anonymous questions to put in their worry box in order to avoid embarrassment and ensure this part of their learning is as open as possible.
- Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering within the classroom, provision will be made to meet the individual child's need
- We acknowledge that sensitive and complex issues will arise in RSE, as students will naturally ask questions. When spontaneous discussion arises, it will be guided in a way which reflects the stated school aims and curriculum content for RSE. As a first principle, we will answer questions relating to the planned curriculum for that age group or below to the whole class. We will encourage any questions beyond the planned curriculum, to be discussed with an adult at home.
- When answering questions, we shall ensure that sharing personal information by adults, students or their families is discouraged.
- Where a question or comment from a pupil in the classroom indicates the possibility of abuse, coercion or sexual exploitation, teachers will pass this information to the designated person for child protection in line with the school Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.
- In order to protect learner privacy, we will employ teaching and learning strategies which enable them to discuss issues without disclosing personal experience. For example, we may use fiction, puppets, case studies, role-play, videos, theatre in education to enable pupils to share ideas and opinions and to practise their decision-making skills in a safe learning environment.

Inclusion

Developing an inclusive curriculum is a statutory requirement. We ensure that:

- All pupils are encouraged to develop and display attitudes of mutual knowledge, understanding and acceptance.
- Staff are aware of pupils' religious, ethnic, cultural and linguistic heritage.
- Teaching and learning methods take account of the diversity needs of our pupils and encourage positive attitudes to diversity and race equality.

- The resources, images and contexts used are inclusive and diverse, mirroring the pupils' own lives and offering insight into the lives of others.
- LTPs and lessons are based on diverse backgrounds, experiences and cultural perspectives.
- In accordance with the Equalities Act 2010, issues related to gender stereotyping and sexual identity discrimination will be addressed where appropriate.

Equality

We support equal opportunities in education, seeing it as enabling and encouraging all our students to build self-esteem through discussion and activities in a safe environment. We are equipping them with decision-making skills irrespective of gender roles and stereotyping. We understand the importance of ensuring that all children in our school receive their entitlement to RSE. We will carefully consider disability, gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, vulnerability, religion, cultural and linguistic background when planning and delivering RSE. In relation to nationality, sexual orientation, religion and cultural diversity, we value the different backgrounds of our pupils and, in addressing different views and beliefs, seek to promote tolerance and understanding. Our policy values the different backgrounds of all pupils and, in acknowledging and exploring different views and beliefs, seeks to promote respect and understanding. We encourage respect for all religions and cultures.

In order to ensure the RSE Curriculum meets the needs of all:

- We will not promote one lifestyle over another.
- We will not seek to gain consensus but will accept and celebrate difference.
- We will encourage respect and discourage abuse and exploitation.
- We will not ask children to represent the views of a particular religious or cultural group to their peers, unless they choose to do so.

As far as is appropriate, pupils with special educational needs should follow the same PSHE and RSE curriculum as their peers. When planning the curriculum for different cohorts we consider:

- their level of vulnerability (including safeguarding)
- their need to learn and demonstrate appropriate behaviour
- their need to develop self-esteem and positive body image
- the need to involve all staff, in policy development, planning and training
- the management of personal care
- clarity about sources of support for pupils.

Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, 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 (known as protected characteristics).

In line with the provisions made within the Equality Act, it will be the position of Mill Green School to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic. This will be taken into consideration in the design and delivery of lessons within the RSE curriculum. It is the intention of Mill Green

School to build a culture where sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and addressed appropriately.

LGBT+

Content related to LGBT+ is fully integrated into a range of topics, rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. All people, including staff and students, have a right to privacy. This includes the right to keep private one's trans status or gender-nonconforming presentation at school. Information about a student's transgender status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth also may constitute confidential medical information. School staff should not disclose information that may reveal a student's transgender status or gender- nonconforming presentation to others, including parents, carers and other members of the school community, unless legally required to do so or because the child or young person has asked them to do so. Staff should not discuss trans students outside of school with friends and so on, even when making no particular reference to their name or personal details. The trans community is such a small one that even a casual reference to a 'certain student' may be enough to out that individual or, at the very least, compromise confidentiality. When a child or young person initially discloses their trans status, it is important to talk to them about confidentiality and who, if anyone, they would like information to be shared with. Trans and gender questioning students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share information. When contacting the parent or carer of a trans or gender questioning student, school personnel should use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or carer has specified otherwise.

Dealing with inappropriate sexual behaviour

The curriculum, especially in SRE lessons, raises pupils' awareness about inappropriate sexual behaviour using appropriate resources, outside agencies (where appropriate) and a carefully designed curriculum. The PSHE lead stays up to date with training, and any other teachers or tutors who are involved in the delivery are advised on ways to raise their awareness about inappropriate sexual behaviour and how to deal with it. Inappropriate sexual behaviour can include:

- Inappropriate touching/ sexual bullying
- Sexting i.e. sharing of inappropriate images
- Cyberbullying

Any inappropriate sexual behaviour is dealt with using the school's behaviour policy. Issues surrounding this sort of behaviour will be dealt with by the Safeguarding Team, the Deputy Headteacher(s) and ultimately, the Headteacher. Onward referrals may be made to Children's Social Care, TAZZ, Catch-22 or the Police.

Staff Training

Teaching RSE can be very rewarding, but we understand that, in order to feel confident, staff need opportunities to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes. We recognise that all adults have different personal beliefs and attitudes about RSE. We will discuss relevant issues and, where appropriate, arrange training to enable staff members to feel confident in delivering the Curriculum for RSE. We will also encourage the sharing of good practice.

Teachers access specific training in both subject material and appropriate teaching methodologies whether this be internally or externally. This training will ensure that teachers who are responsible for delivering RSE will be able to ensure that any issues will be discussed in

a safe environment where trust, co-operation and support between the pupils minimises embarrassment. All teaching staff receive annual child protection training and are aware of how to treat a disclosure by a pupil.

We ensure that staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues related to RSE including:

- Confidentiality
- Setting ground rules and establishing positive behaviour,
- Handling controversial issues and
- Responding to questions.

We ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with the school policy and guidance relating to relationships and sex education. We ensure their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school

Use of visitors to support RSE

We believe that RSE is most effectively taught by those who know our pupils well and are aware of their needs. We encourage visitors to our school who may enhance, but never replace, our planned provision. The school will bring in specialist knowledge to implement different ways of engaging with young people as necessary and will work closely with visitors to ensure the needs of pupils are met.

Where school uses external agencies, we will check the credentials of the visiting organisation and any visitors linked to the agency. School will also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with the planned programme and the published policy. Schools will work with external agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. Any materials that are used as part of the delivery must be approved in advance of the session. The school will ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Safeguarding Policy. Any visitor to the classroom will be bound by the school's policy on confidentiality, regardless of whether they have, or their organisation has, a different policy. We will make sure visitors are aware of this, and make sure there are opportunities for pupils to access confidential support after the lesson if they need it.

We will follow this Code of Practice when working with visitors:

- The care and management of pupils is always the responsibility of the school.
- In class teaching situations, visitors will not be asked to work alone with pupils but will be supported by a member of staff.
- The school will know whether visitors are DBS checked and arrangements will be made to accompany them as appropriate.
- All visitors will be made aware of the content and principles of this Policy, prior to their visit.
- All lessons will be planned in liaison with the PSHE/RSE Co-ordinator/Class teacher, taking account of the age & needs of the group and the context of the work within the RSE programme.
- Visitors will be reminded that, whilst contributing to RSE in a classroom setting, they must adhere to the same confidentiality code as staff members.
- Any resources which a visitor wishes to use or distribute will be discussed and agreed with the PSHE/RSE Co-ordinator/Class Teacher beforehand.

When external agencies are used, the impact of sessions will be closely monitored and reviewed as part of the programme of quality assurance to ensure that students get the best outcome.

Other agencies supporting the school's RSE curriculum are Education professionals, health professionals and the school nurse team, all of which will be made aware of this policy, the RSE curriculum and work in-line with it.

Resources

We will use appropriate resources when planning and delivering the RSE Curriculum that ensure the curriculum is accessible to ALL our pupils. These include: drama, themed discussions / debates, role play/scenarios, card sorting, creative tasks, approved media, and sensory curriculum tools. We will avoid a 'resource-led' approach to delivering RSE, instead focusing on the needs of the children and our planned learning objectives. We will carefully select resources which meet these objectives. We will carefully evaluate teacher resources, leaflets and videos, before using them.

We will select resources which:

- are consistent with our Curriculum for RSE
- relate to the aims and objectives of this Policy
- are suitable to the age, maturity, needs, linguistic proficiency and ability of the children
- appeal to adults and children
- are up-to-date in factual content
- are produced by a reputable organisation
- avoid racial, gender and sexual stereotyping
- encourage active and participative learning
- conform to the legal requirements for RSE.

The resources used may include video material which may be explicit, but pupils will be protected from material which is inappropriate having regard to their age and/or cultural background. Materials used are in accordance with our PSHE policy and the law thus inappropriate images and explicit material not directly related to explanation will be avoided.

RSE Across the Curriculum

As well as the discrete RSE curriculum in place, aspects of RSE are also touched on in across curriculum areas. Many of the RSE themes arise as part of the normal exploration of issues connected to areas of study. This supports RSE, but as it is delivered in the context of another curriculum subject, is not deemed to fall under the parents right to withdraw.

Impact

The outcomes for learners at Mill Green include enabling them to:

- Develop full responsibility for their own behaviour and the ability to take effective action when they experience inappropriate behaviour which affects themselves or their peers.

- Enable young people to understand the biological facts related to human growth and development including reproduction and contraception.
- Enable young people to understand human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, the nature of feelings and emotions experienced by themselves and others, and the importance of healthy personal relationships.
- Develop an understanding of and sensitivity to different lifestyles, needs and feelings of others.
- Help young people to identify and enable them to use sources of help and advice available within the family, school and community.
- Assist young people in making informed decisions about their sexual behaviour and the consequences of behaviour which carry risks.
- Encourage exploration of values and moral issues particularly the value of family life in its many different contexts.
- Know and understand the legal framework relating to sexual activity.
- Foster a range of personal skills and qualities such as communication, decision making, negotiation, assertion and self-esteem which will enhance the young people's ability to lead sexually fulfilling and healthy lives.
- Enable young people to appreciate how their decisions over sexual behaviour contribute to their personal identity and integrity

Assessment in RSE

The school has the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. Our curriculum builds on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress. Through effective lesson planning it is anticipated that there will be opportunities for non-summative assessment to occur. The effectiveness of this formative assessment can be judged as part of the lesson observation schedule with RSE lessons. Learning is assessed and assessments are used to identify where pupils need extra support, intervention or additional challenge. Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for RSE, teachers will assess all outcomes to capture progress.

Assessment methods:

- Baseline or pre-assessment (essential for needs-led RSE)
- Needs assessment is used to identify existing knowledge and skills of pupils
- Strategies include tests/quizzes, written assignments, self/peer evaluations, use of structured questioning, mind-maps, presentations/role-play, pupil interviews and learning portfolios.
- Summative assessment takes place at the end of each unit
- Pupil self-assessment and peer assessment is used where appropriate
- Assessment focuses on knowledge as well as skill development and attitudes
- All class teachers have assessment sheets to support the module to record progress
- Identify pupils who have exceeded or fallen short of the module objectives and those that have achieved or exceeded it
- Teachers will keep a note of pupils who have missed RSE sessions due to absence from school
- Teachers delivering RSE should constantly evaluate their lessons to inform future planning

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

We are committed to the ongoing development of RSE in our school. Key factors to be considered as part of this process are:

- Has a coordinated and consistent approach to curriculum delivery been adopted?
- Is content of the RSE curriculum flexible and responsive to pupils' differing needs?
- Are staff teaching RSE suitably skilled and knowledgeable?
- Does the RSE curriculum reflect national guidance, local priorities and pupils' needs?
- Are all pupils being taught the curriculum as intended?
- Is the quality of teaching consistent across all classes and does it exemplify best practice?
- Are there clearly identified learning objectives for all RSE activities?
- Is pupils' learning assessed using both formative and summative approaches?
- Are the RSE resources used suitable and accessible?
- Are opportunities for cross-curricular approaches being used where appropriate?
- Are opportunities provided for parents/carers to consider the purpose and nature of our RSE curriculum, for example, through parent/carer information sessions/workshops?
- Are a variety of methods employed to communicate key points of the RSE policy and curriculum to the community e.g. through the school website?

Supported by the Senior Leadership Team, the PSHE Lead is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in RSE. The quality of RSE provision is also subject to regular and effective self-evaluation as part of an annual subject report for PSHE and Citizenship. The delivery and impact of RSE is monitored and measured by both formal and informal methods including:

- Pupil Feedback
- Pupil Review Questionnaires, end of PSHE session/topic reviews
- Learning Walks
- Staff Feedback
- Meetings between the PSHE lead, DSL & School Nurse (for Sex Education).
- Parental/Carer Feedback
- Conversations, emails, newsletter, ongoing dialogue.
- Wider & Beyond School events
- Assemblies
- Recording of pupil attendance in RSE lessons
- Effective PSHE leadership with a system of lesson observations and peer support
- A system for regular review of the RSE policy and programme
- Scrutinising staff planning and assessment records
- Samples of pupils' work
- Teacher and pupil evaluation of lessons, units and the overall RSE programme
- Teacher and pupil evaluation of resources
- Evaluation of contributions of external partners

Policy Review

As described earlier in this policy, parents and carers will be consulted about the policy and will have an opportunity to share their views. Policy and practice is revised regularly and involves staff, governors, parents/carers and pupils. The policy will be available on the school's website and all stakeholders will be notified of any changes.

Learners have the right, as provided for by Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), to contribute in a meaningful way to the development and review of the RSE programme. Pupil participation, such as the school council enables learners to express their views on their needs at different key stages.

This policy draws on and is informed by the following national and local documents:

- Sex & Relationships Education for the 21st Century' (Brook, PSHE Association, Sex Ed Forum)
- Sex Education Forum Guidance & Resources (Sex Education Forum)
- National Curriculum (DfE 2014)
- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfEE 2000)
- Not Yet Good Enough (Ofsted 2013) (report on PSHE)
- Programme of Study for PSHE Education (PSHE Association)
- Young People, Relationships and Sex – The New Norms (IPPR 2014)
- Health-Related Behaviour Survey 2016 SHEU
- Shhh....No Talking – LGBTQ Inclusive RSE in the UK 2016
- Digital Romance Report December 2017
- 'It's just everywhere' Sexism in Schools Report December 2017
- Sexting in schools and colleges: Responding to incidents & safeguarding young people UKCIS
- International technical guidance on sexuality education UNESCO

Signed.....Date.....

(Headteacher)

Signed.....Date.....

(Chair of Governors)

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