MERTON COURT SCHOOL

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

To be reviewed November 2027 by: SMSC Co-ordinator, Headmaster, LT
Signed by the Headmaster/Proprietor:
Shared with staff: 23.11.26
Put on the Website: 23.11.26

THIS RELATIONSHIPS AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY APPLIES TO THE WHOLE SCHOOL INCLUDING EYFS.

Related policies and documents:

- PSHEE and Citizenship
- Curriculum Policy
- EYFS policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- RE Policy
- Science Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SEND Policy

The school will ensure that this policy is read alongside the current versions of these documents.

Documents that inform this policy include:

- Education Act (1996), Section 80A Education Act (2002)
- Equality Act (2010)

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- DfE Statutory Guidance: *Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (July 2025, in force from 1 September 2026)
- SEND Code of Practice (Sept 2024)

Purpose and Principles

At Merton Court, we define RSE as learning about the emotional, social, and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, human sexuality, and health. It equips children with the knowledge, skills, and values to:

- develop healthy, respectful relationships;
- understand the changes they and others will experience through puberty;
- safeguard themselves from harm, both online and offline;
- prepare for adult life in a modern, diverse society.

As a school with a Christian ethos, we approach RSE within a moral and spiritual framework, recognising the value of family life, stable relationships, respect, and care for others. Teaching will be factual, respectful, consistent with the law and sensitive to children from different religions and non-religious backgrounds.

The curriculum will be positive, inclusive, carefully sequences, age and stage-appropriate and responsive to the children's needs. It will build knowledge and skills before children are likely to encounter relevant experiences. Teaching will promote kindness, respect, self-worth, honesty, integrity, courage and trustworthiness, and will help children recognise when something is not right.

Aims of RSE

Through our curriculum, we aim for children to:

- understand different types of relationships, including friendships, families, and online connections;
- recognise positive and negative relationship behaviours;
- know the physical and emotional changes during puberty;
- learn the correct names for body parts and functions;
- respect equality and diversity in relationships;
- know how to seek help, advice, or support if they feel unsafe.

Children are also taught to recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse; understand that abuse is never the victims fault; identify bullying, including online bullying and prejudice-based or discriminatory bullying; challenge harmful

stereotypes and know how and where to report concerns. Children are encouraged to keep seeking help until they are heard.

Curriculum Content

Our RSE programme is delivered through PSHE (using the *1Decision* scheme), Science, and the wider curriculum.

The planned programme will cover, in an age-appropriate and carefully sequenced way:

- **Relationships education** : friendships, families, respect, managing conflict, boundaries, bullying, online safety, stereotypes and seeking help.
- **Being safe:** Privacy, appropriate and inappropriate contact, the right to bodily autonomy, recognising unsafe or harmful behaviour, trusted adults, and how to report concerns.
- **Online safety and relationships:** respectful online communication, online identity and people pretending to be someone else, harmful contact and content, pressure to share personal information or images, privacy and location settings, permanence and circulation of online material, and where to seek help.
- **Health and Wellbeing education through PSHEE:** mental wellbeing, emotional literacy, healthy lifestyles, puberty, menstruation, changes to the adolescent body and knowing where to seek support.
- **Sex Education in primary:** where taught beyond the statutory Science curriculum, the content will be clearly identified in the curriculum plan, age-appropriate, shared with parents in advance and subject to the parental right to request withdrawal.

The school will maintain a year-by-year curriculum map which identifies the content, when it is taught, the lesson sequence, the member of staff responsible and any resources or external providers used. The map will be reviewed to ensure that all statutory Relationships Education content is covered by the end of primary education.

The curriculum will include the correct terminology for body parts, including genitalia, taught sensitively and without unnecessary detail about sexual activity. Children learn that their bodies belong to them, that privacy and boundaries matter, and that it is not always appropriate to keep a secret, particularly where someone may be unsafe.

Teaching about families will recognise that families take many forms, including single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers kinship carers, adoptive and foster families. These are represented positively so that no child is stigmatised because of their home circumstances.

The school addresses online risks and emerging issues when relevant to children's needs. Where the school needs to depart from the published

programme to respond to an emerging issue, parents will be informed in advance wherever practicable and relevant materials will be made available on request.

Parents wishing to request withdrawal from RSE lessons should contact the Head of Pastoral Care/Assistant Head (Academic) in writing. Before confirming arrangements, the request will be discussed with the parents, and where appropriate the child, to explain the nature and purpose of the teaching and the possible implications of withdrawal. The discussion and decision are recorded.

Where a child is withdrawn from sex education, the school will provide appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. This will be discussed and explained to parents.

Progression through Key Stage 2:

- **S3 (Year 5):** pupils are introduced to puberty. Initial sessions are delivered in **single-gender groups** to allow sensitive discussion, followed by mixed-class sessions before half term. Parents will be informed of this content through **class newsletters**.
- **S4 (Year 6):** pupils revisit puberty.

Safe and Effective Practice

To ensure that RSE is delivered safely and effectively, we:

- Establish and agree **ground rules** at the start of lessons (e.g., respect, no personal questions, right to pass).
- Use **distancing techniques** (e.g., case studies, scenarios, stories) rather than personal experiences.
- Teach within a **safe and respectful environment** where children can ask questions appropriately.
- Ensure staff know how to manage disclosures and follow **safeguarding procedures** if concerns arise.
- Adapt lessons for pupils with SEND, using visual supports, simplified language, small-group support, or pre-teaching where appropriate.

Delivery

- Weekly lessons led by class teachers using *1Decision,* alongside relevant learning in Science and wider curriculum.
- Interactive activities, videos, and discussions.
- Differentiated lessons to meet the needs of all learners, including SEND.
- Support through "Mental Health Champions" (KS2) and wellbeing initiatives in EYFS.

- Where external visitors are used, the school remains responsible for the content and delivery. (Refer to our Visiting Speakers Policy).
- **Parent communication:** S3 parents will be informed prior to puberty teaching.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **SMSC Lead** and **Head of Pastoral Care** oversee curriculum planning, delivery, and evaluation.
- SMSC Lead will maintain the curriculum map and resources list, coordinate parent communication, gather feedback and ensure staff delivering the programme know how to access safeguarding advice.
- Teachers deliver lessons with sensitivity and professionalism.
- DSL ensures safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately.
- The Headmaster is responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, that parents are informed of their rights, and that the curriculum and materials meet the requirements of the statutory guidance. The Headmaster/Proprietor and Leadership Team ensures appropriate oversight and review.

Assessment and Monitoring

- Ongoing self-assessment and reflection by the children.
- Teacher assessment through discussion and activities.
- Monitoring by SMSC Lead through planning reviews and lesson observations.
- Annual reporting to parents via reports and parent evenings.
- Evaluate whether the curriculum is well sequenced, meets children's needs, is accessible to children with SEND, covers the required content and enables children to know how to seek help.
- Child and parent feedback will inform review and development.

Safeguarding

Effective RSE supports safeguarding by enabling children to:

- recognise inappropriate or abusive behaviour;
- understand consent, privacy, and personal boundaries;
- know how to report concerns.

Staff follow safeguarding procedures (through KCSIE 2026 Part 1) and will consult the DSL if concerns arise. Any concerns or a disclosure during a RSE lesson will be reported immediately to the DSL or DDSL.

Policy Development & Accessibility

This policy was developed in consultation with pupils, parents, staff, Advisory Board, and the SMSC Lead, ensuring it reflects the needs and values of our school community.

The policy is published on the school website and available in print or alternative formats (e.g. large print, translated versions) on request.

Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Headmaster, SMSC Co-ordinator, and LT, or earlier in response to legislative or statutory changes.