Harbour Schools Partnership

A guiding light for education

SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

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Author/owner:	**Board of Trustees**
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NB. 'Trustees' means the Directors referred to in the Trust's Articles of Association

Primary academies — adopt and complete locally (remove this box when uploading to website)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. AIMS 3
2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS 3
3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT 3
4. DEFINITION 3
5. CURRICULUM 4
6. DELIVERY OF RSE 4
7. USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS 6
8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 6
9. PARENTS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW 7
10. TRAINING 7
11. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS 7

APPENDIX 1: CURRICULUM MAP 8

APPENDIX 2: BY THE END OF PRIMARY SCHOOL, PUPILS SHOULD KNOW 8

APPENDIX 3: PARENT/CARER FORM REQUESTING WITHDRAWAL FROM SEX EDUCATION WITHIN RSE 13

APPENDIX 4: WHAT PARENTS HAVE TOLD US 14

1. AIMS

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

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Create a positive culture around issues of relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

1.2 At Marwood School, our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum supports our vision of *Growing Learners, Shaping Futures*. Through learning about relationships, respect, personal safety, emotional wellbeing and healthy lifestyles, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and confidence they need to thrive now and in the future. RSE contributes directly to our school values of:

Learning to Learn by developing self-awareness, resilience and informed decision-making.

Ambitious Progress by helping pupils build confidence, independence and aspirations for the future.

Respectful Consideration by promoting kindness, empathy, inclusion and positive relationships with others.

We believe that effective RSE helps children become responsible, respectful and active members of society who understand how to keep themselves safe, healthy and happy.

2. STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

2.1 As a primary academy, we must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

2.2 We don't have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum, including requirements to teach science. This includes the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

2.3 In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreement to have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. We follow the statutory guidance that comes into force on 1 September 2026.

2.4 We also have regard to the legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), 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

2.5 We also have regard to our funding agreement and articles of association. We teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. POLICY DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This policy has been developed in consultation with pupils, staff, governors and parents. The school has considered feedback from stakeholders alongside statutory guidance and the needs of our school community. Governors have reviewed the policy to ensure it reflects both legal requirements and the school's vision and values.

Parents are informed about the RSE curriculum through our website, curriculum information and direct communication from the school. Opportunities are provided for parents to view resources and discuss any questions or concerns regarding RSE provision.

4. DEFINITION

4.1 For the purpose of this policy:

- RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity
- In our primary academies the core entitlement is relationships education and health education; any sex education we provide is set out in section 6
- RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values
- RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity

5. CURRICULUM

5.1 Our RSE curriculum is set out in Appendices 1 and 2 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

5.2 We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs (such as cultural and religious needs) and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

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

6. DELIVERY OF RSE

6.1 RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

6.2 The school will make sure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work
- 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

6.3 Our scheme

6.3.1 Marwood School delivers Relationships and Sex Education through the SCARF programme and associated resources. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to build knowledge progressively from Reception to Year 6.

Pupils learn about:

Families and people who care for them

Caring friendships

Respectful relationships

Online relationships

Being safe

Mental wellbeing

Physical health and fitness

Healthy lifestyles

Growing and changing

Puberty

Human reproduction and birth in an age-appropriate manner

RSE teaching is delivered sensitively and inclusively, recognising the diverse backgrounds, experiences and needs of all pupils.

6.4 Relationships education

6.4.1 Relationships education focuses on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including:

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

6.5 Sex education in Years 5 and 6

6.5.1 Where we teach sex education in addition to the science curriculum, it will focus on:

- How a baby is conceived and born

6.5.2 For clarity: teaching about puberty and the changing adolescent body, including preparing children for the changes that adolescence brings, is part of statutory health education. It is taught to all pupils, is not part of sex education and is not subject to the parental right of withdrawal (see section 9).

6.5.3 Throughout each year group we will use appropriate material to assist learning, such as diagrams, videos, books, games, discussions and practical activities. Teachers will make sure that all pupils' views are listened to, will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion, and will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the pupils.

6.5.4 The school will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils, including any additional needs such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

6.5.5 In line with Department for Education guidance, Marwood Primary School teaches age-appropriate Sex Education in Upper Key Stage 2 as part of the SCARF "Growing and Changing" unit.

This includes teaching about:

Human reproduction

Conception

Pregnancy

Birth

The physical and emotional changes associated with puberty

This content builds upon statutory science learning and prepares pupils for secondary education. Lessons are delivered in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner by trained staff. Parents have the right to request withdrawal from the non-statutory elements of Sex Education as outlined in Section 9 of this policy.

6.6 Inclusivity

6.6.1 These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care not to stigmatise children based on their home circumstances (families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents, among others), and reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

6.6.2 We will be mindful of the law, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity. We will teach these topics in a manner that considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them, is sensitive to all pupils' experiences, and makes pupils feel safe, supported and able to engage with the key messages. We will give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed and will teach in whichever setting is most appropriate — whole-class, small group, or one-to-one.

6.7 Use of resources

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

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

6.7.2 When we consult parents/carers we will provide examples of the resources the school plans to use. We will inform parents/carers in advance of any deviation from our published policy and share relevant materials on request.

7. USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS

7.1 Marwood School does not routinely use external organisations to deliver core Relationships and Sex Education. Responsibility for delivering the curriculum remains with school staff. Where external visitors or specialist agencies are used to enhance learning, they will do so under the direct supervision of school staff and in accordance with this policy, the school's safeguarding procedures and our curriculum expectations.

7.2 We will not, under any circumstances, work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions, use materials produced by such agencies (even where the material itself is not extreme), or work with agencies that do not allow their material to be shared with parents/carers.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 The governing board

8.1.1 The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The Headteacher

8.2.1 The Headteacher is responsible for making sure that RSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing all resources and materials with parents/carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-science components of RSE (see section 9).

8.3 Staff

8.3.1 Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE, and modelling positive behaviour while avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes - being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes
- Monitoring progress and responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science components of RSE

- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL),

8.3.2 Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

8.4 Pupils

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

9. PARENTS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

9.1 Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education, from health education (including teaching about puberty and the changing adolescent body), or from any topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

9.2 **As we teach sex education in addition to the science curriculum:** parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-science components of sex education within RSE. Requests should be put in writing using the form in Appendix 3 and addressed to the headteacher. Alternative schoolwork will be given to pupils who are withdrawn. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers to understand it and to explain the nature, purpose and benefits of the curriculum and will document this conversation. The request will then be granted. The statutory guidance requires primary schools to grant requests to withdraw from sex education automatically, other than for content taught as part of the science curriculum.

10. TRAINING

10.1 Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction, and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

11.1 The delivery of RSE is monitored as part of our curriculum monitoring systems. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

APPENDIX 1: CURRICULUM MAP

Marwood School Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Curriculum

At Marwood School, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is delivered through the SCARF (Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience and Friendship) programme developed by Coram Life Education.

Our RSE curriculum supports the school's vision of Growing Learners, Shaping Futures and helps pupils develop the knowledge, skills and understanding needed to build positive relationships, make informed choices, keep themselves safe and prepare for life in modern Britain.

The curriculum is age-appropriate, inclusive and progressive, ensuring that pupils revisit and build upon key learning throughout their primary education.

Curriculum Aims

Through Relationships and Sex Education, pupils will learn to:

- Develop positive, respectful and healthy relationships.
- Understand the importance of kindness, empathy and mutual respect.
- Recognise and manage feelings and emotions.
- Build confidence, resilience and self-esteem.
- Understand how to keep themselves physically and emotionally healthy.
- Recognise and respond to situations that may affect their safety.
- Develop an understanding of diversity and inclusion.
- Understand the changes associated with growing up and puberty.
- Prepare for transition to secondary school and adult life.

SCARF Curriculum Structure

The SCARF programme is organised through six recurring themes which are revisited throughout the school:

Theme	Main Focus
Me and My Relationships	Friendships, feelings, emotions, cooperation and conflict resolution
Valuing Difference	Respect, equality, inclusion, diversity and anti-bullying
Keeping Myself Safe	Personal safety, online safety, consent and risk management
Rights and Responsibilities	Citizenship, community, responsibilities and the wider world
Being My Best	Physical health, emotional wellbeing, achievement and aspirations
Growing and Changing	Life cycles, puberty, relationships and transition

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Progression Through the School

Early Years Foundation Stage
Children learn about:

- Forming friendships and positive relationships.
- Taking turns and sharing.
- Recognising and managing feelings.
- Family life and people who care for us.
- Healthy lifestyles and self-care.

- Personal safety and seeking help from trusted adults.
- Understanding similarities and differences between people.

Key Stage 1
Children learn about:

- Different families and family relationships.
- Caring friendships and respectful behaviour.
- Managing feelings and emotions.
- Keeping safe both online and offline.
- Healthy lifestyles and personal hygiene.
- Body ownership and personal boundaries.
- How people change and grow over time.

Lower Key Stage 2
Children learn about:

- Developing positive relationships and friendships.
- Respecting differences and challenging stereotypes.
- Managing peer influence and conflict.
- Physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Online relationships and digital safety.
- Personal responsibility and citizenship.
- Introduction to the early changes associated with puberty.

Upper Key Stage 2
Children learn about:

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Respect, consent and personal boundaries.
- Managing peer pressure and influence.
- Physical and emotional changes during puberty.
- Human reproduction.
- Pregnancy and birth.
- Online safety, media influence and digital relationships.
- Preparing for secondary school and adolescence.

Puberty and Sex Education
As part of the SCARF "Growing and Changing" unit, pupils in Upper Key Stage 2 learn about the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner.

Pupils will learn about:

- Physical changes during puberty.
- Emotional changes during puberty.
- Personal hygiene and self-care.
- Human reproduction.
- Conception.
- Pregnancy.
- Birth.
- Developing healthy attitudes towards growing up and relationships.

Teaching is delivered by school staff in a safe and supportive environment where pupils are encouraged to ask questions and discuss issues respectfully.

Parents have the right to request withdrawal from the non-statutory elements of Sex Education. Pupils cannot be withdrawn from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or National Curriculum Science.

Inclusion and Equality

Marwood School is committed to providing a Relationships and Sex Education curriculum that is inclusive, accessible and relevant to all pupils.

Teaching:

- Reflects the diversity of modern Britain.
- Promotes equality, respect and inclusion.
- Recognises different family structures and backgrounds.
- Supports pupils with SEND through appropriate adaptation and scaffolding.
- Encourages pupils to value and respect others.
- Is consistent with the school's safeguarding responsibilities and Equality Objectives.

All pupils are entitled to access high-quality Relationships and Sex Education regardless of their background, ability, gender, religion or belief.

Working in Partnership with Parents

Marwood School recognises that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children in matters relating to relationships, health and growing up.

The school aims to work in partnership with parents by:

- Providing clear information about the curriculum.
- Sharing information about RSE through the school website and curriculum information.
- Informing parents before specific puberty and sex education lessons are taught.
- Offering opportunities for discussion where parents have questions or concerns.
- Encouraging families to continue learning and discussion at home.
- By working together, we aim to ensure that children receive consistent messages that promote their wellbeing, safety and healthy development.

Monitoring and Review

The RSE curriculum is monitored and reviewed regularly to ensure that it:

- Meets statutory requirements.
- Reflects pupil needs.
- Remains age-appropriate and inclusive.
- Supports the school's vision and values.
- Continues to prepare pupils effectively for life in modern Britain.
- This appendix should be read alongside the Marwood School Relationships and Sex Education Policy and the school's wider PSHE curriculum.

APPENDIX 2: BY THE END OF PRIMARY SCHOOL, PUPILS SHOULD KNOW

This is the statutory content for relationships education, together with the "Developing bodies" content from statutory health education. Our scheme's mapping shows where each item is taught.

Topic	Pupils should know
Families and people who care for me	• That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, and the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That other children's families sometimes look different from their own, but that they should respect those differences and know that other families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trust and trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy, caring and kind friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded; pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships • That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened • About managing conflict with kindness and respect, and that violence is never right • How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Respectful, kind relationships	• The importance of respecting others, including in families and friendships; how we can balance the needs and wishes of different people, and why this can be complicated • The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in all relationships with friends, family, peers and adults • How to communicate effectively: how to be assertive, express needs and boundaries, and manage feelings including disappointment and frustration • That they can expect to be treated with respect, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • The practical steps they can take in a range of contexts to improve or support their relationships, and the conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness, including opportunities to consider self-esteem and building a sense of their own identity • The difference between being assertive and being controlling, and between being kind to others and neglecting your own needs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • How to seek help when needed, including when concerned about violence or harm, or unsure who to trust

Topic	Pupils should know
	• What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive or lead to bullying, and how to challenge a stereotype
Online safety and awareness	• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not or pretending to be a child • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online, including when anonymous; the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure. • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • That there is a minimum age for joining most social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older users who may be strangers • That it's important to be cautious about sharing information about themselves online, and how to use privacy and location settings to protect their information • 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, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up • That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support
Being safe	• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context), including boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books and resources • About the concept of privacy and its implications for children and adults, including that it's 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), including those they do and do not know • How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust • How to report concerns or abuse — about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. — and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice, for example from their family, school and/or other sources
Developing bodies (Statutory health education-no right of withdrawal)	• About growth and other ways, the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence, including the human life cycle, with puberty discussed as a stage in this process. • The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, and nipples; that all of these parts of the body are private; and skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts. • The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, taught before girls' period starts so that they understand what to expect; puberty teaching is sequenced from year four so that pupils learn about changes before they experience them. whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.

APPENDIX 3: PARENT/CARER FORM REQUESTING WITHDRAWAL FROM SEX EDUCATION WITHIN RSE

> *Include this form only if Harbour adopts Option A in section 6 (sex education in addition to the science curriculum).*

To be completed by parents/carers			
Name of child		**Class**	
Name of parent/carer		**Date**	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
To be completed by the school			
Agreed actions taken following the request (to be recorded and a copy placed in the pupil's educational record):			

APPENDIX 4: WHAT PARENTS HAVE TOLD US

During the review of this policy, staff and governors considered the school's existing RSE provision, statutory guidance and the needs of pupils at Marwood School.

Stakeholders agreed that children should receive a progressive programme of Relationships and Sex Education that promotes safety, wellbeing, inclusion and respect.

The policy will continue to be reviewed periodically, with opportunities for parents and other stakeholders to provide feedback on the school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education.

What matters most to you in how we teach friendships, respect, and staying safe?
Is there anything about our community you'd want us to be especially mindful of?
How would you like us to keep you informed about RSE and health education through the year?
Any thoughts on how we approach growing up and the changes of puberty in years five and year six?