



RIVER VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

**ETHOS, RELATIONSHIP, SEX AND HEALTH
EDUCATION POLICY**

2025

Ethos, Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy

River View Primary School

Head Teacher: Mrs C Batty

Named personnel with designated responsibility

Designated SLT for SRE and Health	Deputy designated SLT	Nominated Governor	Chair of Governors
Mrs C. Batty	Miss R Brodie		Catherine Collier

Head Teacher	Sign and Date	September 2025 <i>C. Batty</i>
Chair of Governing Board	Sign and Date	<i>Catherine Collier</i> September 2025

Review Date	September 2024
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Committee Responsible	Governing Board
Document locations	Shared Drive

Next Review Date	September 2026
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Change History

Version	Date	Change Description	Stored
1	June 2019	In light of the new legislative guidance for Governing Boards – June 2019	
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Introduction

1. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives, the successful delivery through effective teaching of these subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.
2. High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects will help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
3. The Relationships Education, Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education Regulation's 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving Primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory in all secondary schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory (see Summary of Requirements table below).

4. This policy amalgamates the (a) RE and (b) SMSC policies [jointly referred to in this policy as Ethos which we take to mean beliefs including moral and / or spiritual / religious beliefs stemmed from different and diverse cultures] (c) PSHE [Including 2019 guidance about specific Health Education] and (d) SRE policies [including 2019 guidance about Relationship and Sex Education] and will be known as the Ethos, Relationships, Sex and Health (ERSHE) Policy.



5. This policy sets out both the rights of parents/carers to withdraw pupils from sex education and the process that Head Teachers should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from any specific sex education elements that may be delivered in primary schools but from none of the relationship education aspects as clarified in the 2019 guidance from the DfE.
6. Effective teaching in ERSHE will ensure that pupils attending River View will receive core knowledge that is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons, teaching will include sufficient well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to practice applying and embedding new knowledge so that it can be used skilfully and confidently in real life situations.
7. The lead teacher will ensure they work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure current and new SMSC, RE, SRE and PSHE programmes complement each other under the umbrella of the new ERSHE policy. Other subjects within the curriculum will ensure they reinforce the aims of this policy.
8. River View shall ensure that their teachers are equipped to support pupils in making a clear distinction between the online world and other aspects of life. Young people often operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age some are likely to be living a substantial proportion of their life online. Where topics and issues outlined in this policy are likely to be encountered by pupils online. River View shall take this into account when planning how to support pupils in distinguishing between different types of online content and making well-founded decisions. (Please refer to the Online Safety section of the Safeguarding Policy)
9. More broadly, the internet and social media have other important characteristics which young people will be aware of in order to help them use them discriminately. For example, social media users are sometimes prepared to say things in more extreme, unkind or exaggerated ways than they might in face to face situations, and some user's present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online. Some platforms attract large numbers of users with similar, sometimes extreme, views, who do not welcome dissent or debate. Young people should be aware that certain websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising). In addition, criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. Schools should take these factors into account when planning teaching of these subjects and consider the overlap with their wider curriculum to ensure pupils know how to keep themselves and their personal information safe. (Please refer to the Online Safety section of the Safeguarding Policy)

These subjects are part of the basic school curriculum which allows school flexibility in developing their planned programme, integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum delivery.

Relationships Educations	Relationships and Sex Education	Health Education
All schools providing primary education, including all-through schools and middle schools (includes schools as set out in the Summary section).	All schools providing secondary education, including all-through schools and middle schools (includes schools as set out in the Summary section).	All maintained schools including schools with a sixth form, academies, free schools, non-maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units. The statutory requirement to provide Health Education does not apply to independent schools – PSHE is already compulsory as independent schools must meet the Independent School Standards as set out in the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Independent schools, however, may find the principles in the guidance on Health Education helpful in planning an age-appropriate curriculum.

Governing Boards

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the Governing Board will ensure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes;
- The subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- The quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- Teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND;
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child be withdrawn;
- The subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations

Equality

1. River View will ensure we are compliant with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

1. Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with SEND. High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. Schools should also be mindful of the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subject to those with SEND.

2. At River View the curriculum will be planned so that it takes into consideration pupils that are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Ensuring that the Relationship Education and RSE are supportive to ensure pupils having social, emotional and mental health needs are equipped to deal with real life situations effectively.
3. At River View we will ensure that SEND pupils have a tailored curriculum so that the teaching meets the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages.
4. The staff at River View shall ensure teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, and developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to statutory law.
5. Children who are currently taught in our Language Resource provision will be taught alongside those children in the mainstream setting, where appropriate and with support where needed.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)

1. At River View, we will ensure that through the teaching of Ethos, Relationships, Sex and Health Education that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. We will ensure that we comply with the Equality Act 2010.
2. At River View we will ensure that all the teaching is sensitive and age appropriate.

Relationships Education

Pupils attending River View will:

1. Be given the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and with adults.
2. Be taught about what relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them.
3. Be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and with respect. The importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. These skills are the forerunners of teaching about consent which takes place during pupil's secondary education.
4. Be taught to respect one another in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding one's own and other boundaries in play, in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources amongst other examples.
5. Be taught explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts should enable pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

6. Be taught the principles of positive relationships also apply online especially as, by the end of primary school, many children will already be using the internet. When teaching relationships content, teachers will address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. Teachers should include content on how information and data is shared and used in all contexts, including online; for example, sharing pictures, understanding that many websites are businesses and how sites may use information provided by users in ways they might not expect.
7. Be taught about families; requiring sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, and foster parents/carers amongst other structures.) Care needs to be taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. looked after children or young carers.
8. Develop a growing ability to form strong and positive relationships with others depends on the deliberate cultivation of character traits and positive personal attributes, (sometimes referred to as 'virtues') in the individual. At River View we will encourage the development and practice of resilience and other attributes, this includes character traits such as helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Alongside understanding the importance of self-respect and self-worth, pupils should develop personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including by providing planned opportunities for young people to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely.
9. Be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.
10. Be given the knowledge they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. We will achieve this by focusing on boundaries and privacy, ensuring young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This should also include understanding boundaries in friendships with peers and also in families and with others, in all contexts, including online. Pupils will know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. We will ensure that at all stages it will be important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of a comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge can support safeguarding of children.

By the end of primary school, your children will know:

Families and people who care for me	<p>Pupils will know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also character • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring friendships	<p>Pupils will know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.
Respectful relationships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority. • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
Online Relationships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. • How information and data is shared and used online.
Being Safe	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and other (Including is a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all context, including online) whom they do not know. • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Sex Education

1. The Relationship Education, RSE, and Health Education Regulations 2019 have made Relationship Education compulsory in all primary schools. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools but the recommendation is that Primary schools should have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.
2. River View will teach about health and this will include initial puberty. The national curriculum for science also includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age and reproduction in some plants and animals.
3. As a school we reserve the right to adapt this aspect of the curriculum depending upon the needs of our pupils at any given point in time. In this case the Governing Board will be informed prior to contacting the parents/groups of parents to ensure clarity of delivery inclusive of a rationale. This shall be considered on a yearly basis to ensure that children are adequately supported in the transition phase before moving to secondary school to support pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. Our overarching aim is to ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science – how a baby is conceived and born.
4. To ensure this aspect of the curriculum is appropriate, River View will consult with parents before the penultimate year of primary school about the detail of the curriculum delivery. This process will offer parents appropriate support to enable them to talk to their children about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school. These objectives will require a graduated, age-appropriate programme of sex education that will be discussed with both year 5 and year 6 teachers prior to meeting with parents. A full range of resources, including worksheets, videos and books will be available to parents on request.

5. In the unlikely event that River View teachers will be required to teach aspects of sex education which go beyond the national curriculum for science, we will set this out in an additional annex to this policy after we have consulted with parents on what is to be covered and the rationale why.
6. We will reserve the right for parents to withdraw their children. The Head Teacher will then follow the process of establishing contact with parents wishing to act on their right.

Right to be excused from Sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw)

1. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from all sex education delivered in primary schools. Before granting any such request, the Head Teacher shall meet with parents to discuss their concerns and with the child/ren to ensure that the child's wishes are understood and to enable the HT to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.
2. On receipt of a written request the school will document this process to ensure a record is kept.
3. The HT shall clearly indicate the benefits of receiving this element of education and point out any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This may include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was taught in class rather than what was directly taught by the teacher.
4. Once the discussion with the HT and parent/HT and child have taken place, except in exceptional safeguarding circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child.
5. This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the HT may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.
6. The Head Teacher will follow this process and grant a request to withdraw a pupil from any sex education delivered unless it forms part of the science curriculum.
7. If a pupil is excused from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
8. There is no right to withdraw from Relationship Education or Health Education.

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

River View's Aim:

Our aim of teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing is to provide pupils with information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It is intended to enable pupils to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others and, when issues arise, know how to seek support, advice, guidance as early as possible from appropriate sources. We will teach the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. Teachers should be clear that mental health and wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

1. This starts with pupils being taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences. This should enable pupils to articulate how they are feeling, develop the language to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate for the situations that they experience.
2. Teachers teach the steps pupils can take to protect and support their own and others' health and wellbeing, including simple self-care techniques, personal hygiene, prevention of health and wellbeing problems and basic first aid.

3. Emphasis will be given to the positive two-way relationship between good physical health and good mental wellbeing, and the benefits to mental wellbeing of physical exercise and time spent outdoors. This supports the holistic delivery of River View's curriculum content.
4. Pupils will also be taught the benefits of hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities. This teaching will make clear that people are social beings and that spending time with others, taking opportunities to consider the needs of others and practising service to others, including in organised and structured activities and groups (for example the scouts or girl guide movements), are beneficial for health and wellbeing.
5. Pupils will be taught about the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risks of excessive use of electronic devices. In later primary school, pupils will be taught why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions and should be equipped to manage common difficulties encountered online.
6. A firm foundation in the benefits and characteristics of good health and wellbeing will enable teachers to talk about isolation, loneliness, unhappiness, bullying and the negative impact of poor health and wellbeing.

By the end of primary school pupils should know	
Mental Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health • That there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all human experience in relation to different experiences and situations • How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings • How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate • The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness • Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests • Isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an appropriate adult and seek support. • That bullying (inclusive of cyber-bullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing. • Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school pupils would speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online) • It is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially, if accessed early.

Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits. • About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing. • How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private. • Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted. • That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health. • How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted. • Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.
Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. • The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking, cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise • The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (inclusive of obesity) • How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content) • The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health)
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. • About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. • About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing. • The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination

Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body. • About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good healthy and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn. • About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist. • About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of hand washing. • The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary. • Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries.
Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. • About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

Religion and beliefs

1. Pupils attending River View shall be supported to foster a sound understanding and a respectful outlook for different faiths, beliefs and backgrounds.
2. In the delivery of the RE curriculum the religious background of all the pupils attending River View will be taken into account when planning teaching so that the topics that are included in the core content are appropriately delivered. In this, River View shall ensure we are compliant with the relevant provision of the Equality Act 2010, under which religious or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.
3. In all schools, teaching should reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make.