



Outcomes  
First Group

# RSHE Policy

Acorn Park School



Acorn Park

Updated September 2025

## Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) policy

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## Introduction

This policy provides us with a framework for meeting statutory requirements and for achieving the school aims of enhancing students' knowledge in Relationship and Sex Education (RSE). The school RSE Policy aims to promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

We are committed to providing a differentiated, broad and balanced programme of RSE education that will benefit all students and to encouraging pupils to develop an enjoyment of this subject.

This RSE policy provides information about the departments policies, objectives and aims and its work which will be helpful to:

- Teaching Staff in the School
- School Leadership Team (SLT)
- Staff Covering RSE lessons

## LOCAL AND NATIONAL GUIDANCE:

This policy has been written in consultation with the following guidance:

- PSHE Association guidance document, 2013
- Sex and Relationship Education Guidance (DfE 0116/2000)
- National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy
- QCA PSHE Curriculum Framework for Schools 2000
- National Curriculum 2000 Statutory Science
- National Healthy Schools Standards 2006
- Ofsted (2002) Sex and Relationships. Office for Standards in Education, London.

## Policy context and rationale

This relationships, sex and health education policy covers the Acorn Park School approach to teaching relationships, sex and health education (RSHE). This policy has been subject to thorough consultation with the whole-school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, school governors and where relevant appropriate members of the wider community such as medical professionals and faith leaders. Pupil consultation has ensured that the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate RSHE curriculum that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities. Consultation methods have included feedback gathered at the end of sessions. Introduction to the subject meetings and tutorials, written letters sent home, class Dojo messages, individual consultation meetings. Key needs identified were surrounding consideration of trauma and anxiety, and the curriculum was adapted to support these needs where necessary, with parental agreement. Pupil consultation has been used to inform the creation of the school's RSHE curriculum and this policy where appropriate.

### Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through RSHE consultation events via Class Dojo and accessing a copy from the school website. Should a hard copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting Louisa Barton school administrator.

## Policy values, aims and objectives

*Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and*

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*living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.*

*These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.*

-Secretary of State Foreword

Our school's overarching aims and objectives for pupils are to care and educate our children, empowering them to reach their full potential, to think big and dream bigger. RSHE is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of RSHE lessons. Our school values are Care: We are courageous in advocating, educating and caring for every child, confident in our purpose to promote kindness respect. Strive: We are striving for a better future by always doing our best with the children we work with. Our inventive efforts support children at Acorn Park to aspire to healthier futures. Grow: We help children fulfil their personal growth and build positive relationships. Children are empowered to reach their full potential. Thrive: We uphold the belief that by being reliable and consistent in our therapeutic practices, by advocating for children and promoting our values, children will thrive on the next step of their life journey.

RSHE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. RSHE equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their sexuality and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of RSHE in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The overarching objective of RSHE is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and provisions of the Equality Act, 2010. Our school's vision for RSHE is we teach Personal, Social, Health Education as a whole-school approach to underpin students' development as people and because we believe that this also supports their learning capacity.

Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, provides a programme which offers us a comprehensive, carefully thought-through Scheme of Work bringing consistency and progression to our students' learning in this vital curriculum area.

The overview of the programme can be seen on the school website.

This also supports the "Personal Development" and "Behaviour and Attitude" aspects required under the Ofsted Inspection Framework, as well as significantly contributing to the school's Safeguarding and Equality Duties, the Government's British Values agenda and the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) development opportunities provided for our young people.

Effective RSHE can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. RSHE will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

RSHE will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes. The following principles are based on research evidence, supported by a wide range of leading organisations including the NSPCC, Barnardo's, The Children's Society and education unions. They are also supported by a number of MPs and Lords:

## Principles of effective RSHE

RSHE provision at Acorn Park:

- ☐ Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages.
- ☐ Is taught by staff regularly trained in RSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate).
- ☐ Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.
- ☐ Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- ☐ Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- ☐ Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, sexual harassment, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- ☐ Gives a positive view of human sexuality with honest and medically accurate information so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- ☐ Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex and nurture respect for different views.
- ☐ Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online.
- ☐ Fosters equality, including LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSHE lessons and in everyday school life.
- ☐ Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- ☐ Seeks pupils' views about RSHE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

## Entitlement and equality of opportunity

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers will include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child will be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self-esteem.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole school community. RSHE will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all pupils have equal access to our RSHE curriculum. We do not use RSHE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

Thorough consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with the school's inclusion policy.

## Teaching and learning

The RSHE programme will be led by Beth Moore, RSHE will be taught by Beth Moore in the secondary formal school, form tutors in the formal primary school, the area lead in the formal 6<sup>th</sup> form, and by form tutors in the semi-formal curriculum and supported by HLTA's, TA's, our swift team, therapy team, school council, external visitors including nurses and Hazel our school police education

officer. All staff involved in the delivery of RSHE have received specialist training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches to RSHE throughout their time at Acorn Park School. Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

On occasion external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSHE to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, our school will:

- ☐ Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.
- ☐ Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- ☐ Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- ☐ Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs).
- ☐ Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- ☐ Arrange for the visitor to be always supervised/supported by a member of school staff.
- ☐ Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning.

RSHE will be taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including storytelling, drama, role play, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc. This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all pupils, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

## **Curriculum**

The elements of the RSHE curriculum are a statutory requirement to teach to meet Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, statutory from September 2020 and The Equalities Act, 2010.

RSHE will be taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that pupils will gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning. RSHE will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

Our intended RSHE curriculum is detailed below but may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. If this is the case, parent/carers will be provided with appropriate notice before the amended programme is delivered. Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies, topic days and cross curricular links.

## Whole-school approach

The Jigsaw Programme covers all areas of PSHE including statutory RSE and Health Education. The table below gives the learning theme of each of the six Puzzles (units) and these are taught across the school; the learning deepens and broadens every year.

Year/ Age	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing me
Ages 3-5	Self-identity Understanding feelings Being in a classroom Being gentle Rights and responsibilities	Identifying talents Being special Families Where we live Making friends Standing up for yourself	Challenges Perseverance Goalsetting Overcoming Obstacles Seeking help Jobs Achieving goals	Exercising bodies Physical activity Healthy food Sleep Keeping clean Safety	Family life Friendships Breaking friendships Falling out Dealing with bullying Being a good friend	bodies Respecting my body Growing up Growth and change Fun and fears Celebrations
Ages 5-6	Feeling special and safe Being part of a class Rights and responsibilities Rewards and feeling proud Consequences Owning the Learning Charter.	Similarities and differences Understanding bullying and knowing how to deal with it Making new friends Celebrating the differences in everyone	Setting goals Identifying successes and achievements Learning styles Working well and celebrating achievement with a partner Tackling new challenges Identifying and overcoming obstacles Feelings of success	Keeping myself healthy Healthier lifestyle choices Keeping clean Being safe Medicine safety/safety with household items Road safety Linking health and happiness	Belonging to a family Making friends/being a good friend Physical contact preferences People who help us Qualities as a friend and person Self acknowledgement Being a good friend to myself Celebrating special relationships	Life cycles – animal and human Changes in me Changes since being a baby Differences between female and male bodies (correct terminology) Linking growing and learning Coping with change Transition

Ages 6-7	Hopes and fears for the year Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Safe and fair learning environment Valuing contributions Choices Recognising feelings	Assumptions and stereotypes about gender Understanding bullying Standing up for self and others Making new friends Gender diversity Celebrating difference and remaining friends	Achieving realistic goals Perseverance Learning strengths Learning with others Group co-operation Contributing to and sharing success	Motivation Healthier choices Relaxation Healthy eating and nutrition Healthier snacks and sharing food	Different types of family Physical contact boundaries Friendship and conflict Secrets Trust and appreciation Expressing appreciation for special relationships	Life cycles in nature Growing from young to old Increasing independence Differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology) Assertiveness Preparing for transition
Ages 7-8	Setting personal goals Self-identity and worth Positivity in challenges Rules, rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Responsible choices Seeing things from others' perspectives	Families and their differences Family conflict and how to manage it (child centred) Witnessing bullying and how to solve it Recognising how words can be hurtful Giving and receiving compliments	Difficult challenges and achieving success Dreams and ambitions New challenges Motivation and enthusiasm Recognising and trying to overcome obstacles Evaluating learning processes Managing feelings Simple budgeting	Exercise Fitness challenges Food labelling and healthy swaps Attitudes towards drugs Keeping safe and why it's important online and offline scenarios Respect for myself and others Healthy and safe choices	Family roles and responsibilities Friendship and negotiation Keeping safe online and who to go to for help Being a global citizen Being aware of how my choices affect others Awareness of how other children have different lives Expressing appreciation for family and friends	How babies grow Understanding a baby's needs Outside body changes Inside body changes Family stereotypes Challenging me ideas Preparing for transition

Ages 8-9	Being part of a class team Being a school citizen Rights, responsibilities and democracy (school council) Rewards and consequences Group decision making Having a voice What motivates behaviour	Challenging assumptions Judging by appearance Accepting self and others Understanding influences Understanding bullying Problem-solving Identifying how special and unique everyone is First impressions	Hopes and dreams Overcoming disappointment Creating new, realistic dreams Achieving goals Working in a group Celebrating contributions Resilience Positive attitudes	Healthier friendships Group dynamics Smoking Alcohol Assertiveness Peer pressure Celebrating inner strength	Jealousy Love and loss Memories of loved ones Getting on and Falling Out Girlfriends and boyfriends Showing appreciation to people and animals	Being unique Having a baby Girls and puberty Confidence in change Accepting change Preparing for transition Environmental change
Ages 9-10	Planning the forthcoming year Being a citizen Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences How behaviour affects groups Democracy, having a voice, participating	Cultural differences and how they can cause conflict Racism Rumours and name-calling Types of bullying Material wealth and happiness Enjoying and respecting other cultures	Future dreams The importance of money Jobs and careers Dream job and how to get there Goals in different cultures Supporting others (charity) Motivation	Smoking, including vaping Alcohol. Alcohol and antisocial behaviour Emergency aid Body image Relationships with food Healthy choices Motivation and behaviour	Self-recognition and self-worth Building self-esteem Safer online communities Rights and responsibilities online. Online gaming and gambling Reducing screen time Dangers of online grooming SMARRT internet safety rules	Self- and body image Influence of online and media on body image Puberty for girls Puberty for boys Conception (including IVF) Growing responsibility Coping with change Preparing for transition



Ages 10-11	Identifying goals for the year Global citizenship Children's universal rights Feeling welcome and valued Choices, consequences and rewards Group dynamics Democracy, having a voice Anti-social behaviour Role modelling	Perceptions of normality Understanding disability Power struggles Understanding bullying Inclusion/exclusion Differences as conflict, difference as celebration Empathy	Personal learning goals, in and out of school Success criteria Emotions in success Making a difference in the world Motivation Recognising achievements Compliments	Taking personal responsibility How substances affect the body Exploitation, including 'county lines' and gang culture Emotional and mental health Managing stress	Mental health Identifying mental health worries and sources of support Love and loss Managing feelings Power and control Assertiveness Technology safety Take responsibility with technology use	Self-image Body image Puberty and feelings Conception to birth Reflections about change Physical attraction Respect and consent Boyfriends/girlfriends Sexting Transition
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Year/ Age	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Relationships
Year 7 (1112)	Unique me, differences & conflict. My influences, gateway emotions, belonging to a group, peer pressure, child on child abuse. Online safety, sexting, consequences, online legislation	Bullying, prejudice & discrimination (positive and negative) Equality Act, bystanders, stereotyping, challenging influences, negative behaviour and attitudes, assertiveness	Celebrating success, identifying goals, employment, learning from mistakes, overcoming challenges, planning skills. Safe & unsafe choices, substances, gangs, knives, exploitation. Emergency first aid	Stress and anxiety, managing mental health, physical activity and mental health. Effects of substances, legal consequences. Nutrition and sleep. Vaccination, importance of information on making health choices	Characteristics of healthy relationships, consent. Relationships and change, emotions within friendships, child on child abuse. Rights and responsibilities, being discerning, assertiveness, sexting	Puberty changes, Reproduction facts, FGM, breast flattening/ironing. Responsibilities of parenthood, IVF, types of committed relationships. Media and self-esteem, self-image, brain changes in puberty, factors affecting moods, sources of help and support

Year 8 (1213)	Self-identity, influences, family and identity. Stereotypes, personal beliefs and judgements. Managing expectations, first impressions, respect for the beliefs of others. Marriage, protected characteristics. Active listening	Positive change made by others, how positive behaviour affects feelings of wellbeing. Social injustice, inequality, community cohesion and support, multi-culturalism, diversity, race and religion. Stereotypes, prejudice, LGBT+ bullying, child on child abuse, hate crimes. Fear & emotions, stand up to bullying, the golden rule. Organ and blood donation	Long-term goals, skills, qualifications, careers, Money and happiness. Ethics and mental wellbeing, budgeting, variation in income, positive and negative impact of money. Online safety and legal responsibilities, gambling issues	Long-term physical health, responsibility for own health. Dental health, stress triggers and help tips, substances and mood. Legislation associated with substances, exploitation and substances, county lines. Medicine and vaccinations.	Positive relationship with self, social media and relationship with self, negative self-talk. Managing a range of relationships, child on child abuse, personal space. Online etiquette, online privacy, bullying and personal safety. Social media issues and the law, coercion, unhealthy balance of power in relationships, sources of support	Types of close intimate relationships, physical attraction, love. Legal status of relationships, behaviours in healthy and unhealthy romantic relationships, pornography, sexuality, alcohol and risky behaviour
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Year 9 (1314)	Perceptions about intimate relationships, consent. Sexual exploitation, peer approval, child on child abuse, grooming, radicalization, county lines. Risky experimentation, positive and negative self-identity, groups, influences, social media. Abuse and coercion, coercive control.	Protected characteristics, Equality Act, phobic and racist language. Legal consequences of bullying and hate crime, sexism, ageism, positive and negative language, banter, child on child abuse, bullying in the workplace. Direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation. Prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping	Personal strengths, health goals, SMART planning. The world of work. Links between body image and mental health. Nonfinancial dreams and goals. Mental health and ill health, media manipulation, selfharm, self-esteem, stigma, anxiety disorders, eating disorders, depression	Misperceptions about young peoples' health choices, physical and psychological effects of drugs and alcohol. Alcohol and the law, alcohol and drug poisoning, addiction, smoking, vaping, drug classification, supply and possession legislation. Emergency situations, first aid, CPR, substances and safety, sources of advice and support	Healthy relationships, power and control in intimate relationships, risk in intimate relationships, importance of sexual consent, assertiveness skills, sex and the law, pornography and stereotypes, contraception choices, age of consent, family planning, consequences of unprotected sex, STIs, support and advice services	Mental health stigma, triggers, support strategies, managing emotional changes, resilience and how to improve it, reflection on importance of sleep in relation to mental health, reflection on changes, benefits of relaxation
Year 10 (1415)	Human rights, societal freedom, understanding safety in UK and beyond. Ending	Equality in the workplace, in society, in relationships, Equality act 2010,	Impact of physical health in reaching goals, relationships and reaching goals.	improving health, mental health, sexual health, blood-borne	sustaining long-term relationships, intimacy, healthy relationship with self, attraction,	impact of societal change on young people, role of media on societal change, reflection on change so far

	relationships safely, stages of grief, loss and bereavement. Social media and culture, use of online data, threats to online safety, online identity. Assessing and managing risk, the law and social media. Positive and negative relationships	vulnerable groups including disability and hidden disability, workplace expectations, rights and responsibilities, power and control in relationships, coercive control, benefits of multi-cultural societies, Equity equality and inequality, my health.	Resilience, work-life balance, connections and impact of mental health. Balanced diet, vital organs, blood donation, benefits of helping others. Online profile and impact on future goals and employability.	infections, self examination. Diet and long-term health, misuse of prescription drugs, substances and the body. Common mental health disorders, positive impact of volunteering. Common threats to health including chronic disease. Epidemics, misuse of antibiotics, organ donation, stem cells	love, lust. Relationship choices, ending relationships safely, consequences of relationships ending e.g bullying, child on child abuse, revenge porn, grief cycle, impact on family. Understanding love, fake news, pornography.	and how to manage it successfully. Decision making, sexual identity, gender, spectrum of sexuality. Stereotypes in romantic relationships, sexual identity and risk, physical and emotional changes, family change, sources of support.
Year 11 (1516)	Becoming an adult. Age limits and the law relationships and the law, consent, coercive control, child on child abuse, domestic abuse, honour-based, violence, arranged and forced marriages The Equality Act 2010. The law on internet use and pornography, social		Anxiety, solution focused thinking, sleep, relaxation, aspiration on; career, finances, budgeting, borrowing, relationships. Skills identification, realistic goals, gambling, financial pressure, debt,	Managing anxiety and stress, exam pressure, concentration strategies, work-life balance. Sexual health, hygiene, self-examination. STIs, sexual pressure, fertility issues, contraception,	Stages of intimate relationships, positive and negative connotations of sex. Spectrum of gender and sexuality, LGBT right and protection under the Equality Act, coming out challenges, LGBT media stereotypes. Child on child abuse, power	

	media concerns, sexting keeping safe. Emergency situations, key advice, first aid, scenarios and consequences		dream jobs, skills set, employment, education and training options. Long term relationship dreams and goals, parenting skills and challenges. Resilience, what to do when things go wrong	consent. Pregnancy choices including adoption, abortion, bringing up a baby, financial implications. Identifying a range of risks including rape and strategies for staying safe. Expectations in relationships	control and sexual experimentation. Forced marriage, honour-based violence, FGM and other abuses, hate crime, sources of support.	
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### **Timetable**

At Acorn park School we allocate 45mins to PSHE each week in order to teach the PSHE knowledge and skills in a developmental and age-appropriate way.

These explicit lessons are reinforced and enhanced in many ways:

- assemblies and collective worship,
- praise and reward system,
- Learning Charter,
- through relationships student to student, adult to student and adult to adult across the school.
- We aim to 'live' what is learnt and apply it to everyday situations in the school community.
- Class tutors/ a dedicated PSHE Team deliver the weekly lessons.
- Each lesson has a 45 minute timetabled slot each week.

### **Assessment**

Pupils' learning will be assessed at the end of every topic to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure and will include self-assessment tasks that will confirm pupils understanding of the topics. The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with pupils and parents as appropriate.

The quality of RSHE teaching and learning will be monitored through RSHE learning walks, team teaching and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training needs. We record breadth of coverage using Gridmaker. Progress is also recorded using Earwig, our school assessment tool.

### **Responding to pupils' questions**

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of RSHE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement. At the end of every lesson, pupils will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions in an open setting and will also be provided with an opportunity to raise anonymous questions through the use of an anonymous 'ask-it basket'. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson. Teachers may delay answering a pupil's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer.

Teachers can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices. If a teacher does not answer a question, the pupil will have the reasons clearly explained and the teacher will work with the pupil to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the pupil to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

## **Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality**

The school's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the beginning of RSHE teaching the class will discuss and create a 'working agreement'. Confidentiality will be included within this agreement so pupils are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within RSHE avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes RSHE more accessible to all pupils including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Teachers will signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Teachers will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on topic coverage, using trusted, high quality local resources, so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

Teachers will understand that an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

In line with the document Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), all staff are aware of what to do if a child tells them that they are being abused or neglected, including referring to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity. Staff are also aware of need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those that need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and children's 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.

## **Involving parents and carers**

We believe that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children in RSHE and that RSHE is most effective when it is collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The school will provide support to parents and carers through an annual workshop which provides a valuable opportunity to develop awareness of emerging RSHE topics, meet RSHE teachers and review the resources being used as well as consider ways to build on the learning at home, fostering strong channels of communication between parents/carers and their children. The school also operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss RSHE at relevant times throughout the school year.

The vast majority of RSHE is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. Parents and carers cannot withdraw

their children from sex education taught in science. If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all of Sex Education taught as part of RSHE, they should discuss this with the headteacher, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The head teacher will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, parents/carers must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, our school will respect a parent/carers' request to have their child excused from sex education up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education, rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. The school will document this process.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

### **Links to other school policies and curriculum**

This policy complements the following policies:

- ☐ Anti-bullying
- ☐ E-safety
- ☐ Equality
- ☐ Inclusion
- ☐ PSHE
- ☐ Safeguarding
- ☐ Teaching and learning.

### **Review date**

The local governing body monitors the impact of RSHE on an annual basis. The governors give serious consideration to any comments, consultation and evidence of impact.

Consultation with pupils will be conducted on a regular basis to support with reviewing the curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs and the policy updated accordingly.

This policy will be reviewed every year or sooner if the RSHE curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing pupil needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance. The next review date of this policy is currently set for September 2026.





Outcomes  
First Group