




The Aylesbury Vale Academy

RESPECT | ASPIRATION | RESILIENCE

Personal Development Policy

Policy Reference:	AVA. 050
Description:	This document provides a framework to explain the Academy's role in delivering its PSHE Curriculum as well as the RSHE elements of the PSHE curriculum.
Status:	Statutory Policy
Policy Audience:	Governors, Staff, Students & Parents/Carers
Academy Contact:	Academy Principal
Other related AVA policies and procedures:	Equality Policy, Child Protection Policy, E-safety Procedures, Safeguarding Procedures
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Signed:	
Date of Signature:	13.05.2026
In reviewing this policy, the Governing Board has had regard to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged by this policy	

Core Document:

Department for Education's Statutory Guidance: Relationships, Sex and Health Education

July 2025 (statutory from September 2026)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

This guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance) - current version
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (statutory guidance)
- Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)

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1. Statement of Intent

This policy outlines the approach to Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) and Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) at The Aylesbury Vale Academy. Our provision meets the requirements of the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance and is delivered to pupils aged 3–18 in an inclusive, age-appropriate and developmentally sequenced manner.

RSHE at AVA is designed to support pupils' personal development, wellbeing and safeguarding. It is delivered as part of a whole-school approach, underpinned by our school values and supported through linked policies including safeguarding, behaviour and anti-bullying. PSHE and RSHE are modelled and reinforced through everyday school life, assemblies, collective worship, pastoral provision, and the wider curriculum.

2. Guiding Principles

Our RSHE curriculum is developed and delivered in line with statutory guidance and is underpinned by the following principles:

1. **Pupil engagement:** The curriculum is informed by meaningful engagement with pupils to ensure it is relevant and responsive to their needs, experiences, and questions.
2. **Parental engagement and transparency:** We work in partnership with parents and carers and are transparent about RSHE content and resources. Parents are consulted during policy review, informed in advance of sex education content, and made aware of their statutory rights.
3. **Positivity:** Teaching promotes healthy, respectful relationships, positive mental health and wellbeing, resilience, self-esteem and confidence, while celebrating diversity and difference and avoiding language that may normalise harmful behaviour.
4. **Careful sequencing:** RSHE is delivered through a spiral curriculum that builds progressively on prior learning, is age- and stage-appropriate, and prepares pupils for future experiences before they encounter them.
5. **Relevance and responsiveness:** The curriculum reflects local and emerging issues affecting pupils and is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains current, accurate, and accessible.
6. **Skilled and safe delivery:** RSHE is delivered by trained staff and, where appropriate, external providers. Teaching is participative and interactive, supported by clear ground rules, safeguarding awareness, and appropriate responses to disclosures.
7. **Whole-school approach:** RSHE is embedded within AVA's ethos and values and reinforced across school systems to create a culture of wellbeing, respect and safety where pupils feel confident to seek help and report concerns.
8. Our RSHE and PSHE provision is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND, vulnerable pupils and those with protected characteristics. Teaching is adapted where necessary to ensure accessibility, safety and progression for all learners.

3. Aims

Through our RSHE and PSHE programme, AVA aims to:

1. Prepare pupils for adult life and their role in society
2. Improve life chances and promote character and virtue development
3. Enable pupils to form healthy, respectful and resilient relationships
4. Support pupils to keep themselves safe, including online

5. Provide honest, medically and legally accurate information
6. Develop well-balanced, informed and responsible citizens

4. Statutory requirements

PSHE, including RSHE, is taught with the same high expectations as other curriculum areas across all key stages from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 5.

4.1 Legal Framework:

We are required to have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance This policy also complies with the Equality Act 2010.

4.2 Our Statutory Duties:

We provide:

- **Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery & Reception):** Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) as a prime area of learning, in line with the EYFS statutory framework
- **Primary (Years 1-6):** Relationships Education and Health Education
- **Secondary (Years 7-11):** Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education
- **Sixth Form (Years 12-13):** Continuation of RSE and Health Education through our Inspiration Programme and PSHE lessons

5. Curriculum

PSHE, including RSE, is delivered through a carefully sequenced, spiral curriculum that builds knowledge, skills and understanding progressively from nursery through to Key Stage 5. All students receive age-appropriate teaching that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.

We use:

- **Primary:** Kapow scheme of learning (adapted to meet our pupils' needs)
- **Secondary:** PSHE Association and UniFrog scheme of learning (adapted to meet our pupils' needs)

Key Stage Allocation:

- **EYFS:** Integrated throughout continuous provision and discrete PSED activities
- **Key Stage 1 & 2:** One timetabled lesson per week
- **Key Stage 3 (Years 7-8):** One timetabled lesson per week
- **Key Stage 4 (Years 9-11):** Bi-weekly lessons
- **Key Stage 5 (Years 12-13):** Delivered through the Inspiration Programme and PSHE sessions

Teachers are responsible for planning and delivering high-quality PSHE/RSHE using our schemes of work, ensuring content is age-appropriate, accessible to all pupils including those with SEND, and builds systematically on previous learning.

5.1 Curriculum Design

Primary

Throughout primary at the AVA, we use the Kapow Scheme of learning when explicitly teaching PSHE and RSHE which is then adapted to meet the needs of the children and families in our school. Kapow Primary covers all areas of PSHE for the primary phase, including statutory Relationships and Health Education.

All students are also taught RSHE and PSHE through:

- A broad selection of assemblies which incorporate themed days and awareness events (such as anti-bullying week)
- Trips
- Opportunities to be a part of sports teams and the student council
- Guest speakers (such as water safety)

EYFS

In the Early Year Foundation Stage (EYFS), Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) is one of the prime areas of learning. Ongoing PSHE experiences and opportunities are planned from the objectives set out in the EYFS curriculum and delivered through weekly discrete planned activities alongside opportunities provided by the Kapow scheme of learning. These experiences allow children to develop a positive sense of themselves and others, whilst forming positive relationships and respect for others.

By the end of the Reception year, children will:

Demonstrate Self-Regulation

- Show an understanding of their own feelings and those of others, and begin to regulate their behaviour accordingly.
- Set and work towards simple goals, being able to wait for what they want and control their immediate impulses when appropriate.
- Give focused attention to what the teacher says, responding appropriately even when engaged in activity, and show an ability to follow instructions involving several ideas or actions.

Demonstrate Managing Self

- Be confident to try new activities and show independence, resilience and perseverance in the face of challenge.
- Explain the reasons for rules, know right from wrong and try to behave accordingly.
- Manage their own basic hygiene and personal needs, including dressing, going to the toilet and understanding the importance of healthy food choices.

Demonstrate Building Relationships

- Work and play cooperatively and take turns with others.
- Form positive attachments to adults and friendships with peers.
- Show sensitivity to their own and to others' needs.

Key Stage 1 and 2

Our PSHE curriculum is based on the Kapow Programme of Study and then adapted to meet the needs of the children and families in our school. The aim is to provide children with:

- accurate, balanced, and relevant knowledge
- opportunities to turn that knowledge into personal understanding
- opportunities to explore, clarify, and if necessary, challenge their own and others' values, attitudes, beliefs, rights, and responsibilities
- the skills, language, and strategies they need to live healthy, safe, fulfilling, responsible and balanced lives
- opportunities to develop positive personal attributes such as resilience, self-confidence, self-esteem, and empathy

Learning opportunities have been organised into a series of recurring themes which last approximately half a term and which children experience every year through a progressive 'spiral programme' which is age and stage appropriate. At each encounter, the level of demand is increased, and learning is progressively deepened. We allocate one stand-alone lesson to PSHE education each week for each year group in KS1 and KS2.

Themes include:

- Families and Relationships
- Health and Wellbeing
- Safety and the Changing Body (RSHE element)
- Citizenship
- Economic Wellbeing
- Transition lesson

Each year group follows the same long-term structure:

EYFS

Three areas aligned to Development Matters:

- Self-regulation
- Building relationships
- Managing self

Years 1–6

Each year includes:

1. Introductory lesson – setting ground rules and creating a safe learning environment.

2. Six units (strands):

- a. Families and relationships
- b. Health and wellbeing
- c. Safety and the changing body
- d. Citizenship
- e. Economic wellbeing
- f. Identity (Year 6 only)

3. Transition lesson

Relationships Education

Statutory Expectations

By the end of primary school, pupils should know and understand:

- Families and people who care for them
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe (DfE Statutory Guidance 2026)

How Kapow Delivers Relationships Education

Examples of Kapow's coverage include:

- **Families and relationships (Y1–Y6)**
 - Children learn about different families, respect, healthy relationships, resolving conflict, caring for others, and understanding safety within relationships.
- **Caring friendships**
 - Understanding how friendships are formed, managing problems, and challenging stereotypes and bullying.
- **Respectful relationships**
 - Stereotypes, manners, trust, managing emotions, recognising and challenging discrimination.
- **Online relationships**
 - Digital citizenship, safe online behaviour, privacy, recognising risks, and reporting concerns. (Y3–Y6 include cyberbullying, online safety and digital influences)
- **Being safe**
 - Boundaries, personal privacy, recognising unsafe situations, terminology for reporting concerns, and knowing how to seek help.

Kapow revisits and builds on each theme annually to ensure a secure spiral curriculum.

Health Education Statutory

Expectations By the end of primary school, pupils should know about:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body (puberty) (DfE Statutory Guidance 2026)

How Kapow Delivers Health Education

Kapow's Health & Wellbeing and Safety & the Changing Body strands cover these areas in depth:

- **Mental wellbeing**
 - Emotional literacy, growth mindset, managing feelings, empathy, and resilience (Y1–Y6).
- **Healthy lifestyles**
 - Exercise, sleep, hygiene, diet, and dental health (Y1–Y6).
- **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco education**
 - Age-appropriate lessons from Year 3 onwards.
- **First aid**
 - Emergency responses such as calling 999, bites/stings, asthma support (Y3–Y5).
- **Puberty and bodily changes**
 - Taught as part of the statutory Changing adolescent body content (Y4–Y6).
- **Online safety and harms**
 - Integrated across Safety & the Changing Body and Health & Wellbeing.

Sex Education

Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools, but the DfE recommends that children understand human reproduction before leaving primary school. At AVA, we define Sex Education as the teaching of human reproduction.

Where Sex Education Sits in Kapow

In Kapow, content relating to conception is taught within:

- Year 6 – Families and Relationships
 - Biology of conception

Puberty is taught as statutory Health Education, not Sex Education.

Impact

Students not only acquire the appropriate age-related and stage appropriate knowledge linked to the PSHE and RSHE curriculum but develop their sense of self-worth needed to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society.

We expect our children to:

- Develop positive and healthy relationships with their peers now and in the future.
- Demonstrate a healthy outlook towards school with good attendance and good behaviour;
- Demonstrate a sense of belonging, welcoming others and being part of a school community, a wider community, and a global community.
- Demonstrate empathy and compassion.

- Celebrate similarities and differences such as diversity, disability, and friendship.
- Accept everyone's right to be 'different'.
- Have respect for themselves and others.
- Recognise the difference between right and wrong and readily apply this understanding to their own lives.
- Recognise and apply the British Values of Democracy – Tolerance, Mutual Respect, Rule of Law, and Liberty.
- Demonstrate perseverance to overcome challenges, manage their emotions, and share aspirations and personal strengths.
- Build a capacity for learning across all curriculum areas as well as their everyday lives.
- Be emotionally and physically healthy, promoting good relationships with food, managing stress and body image.
- Keep themselves safe in and out of school.
- Deal with changes of many types.

Secondary (Key Stages 3, 4 and 5)

Scheme of Work:

We use the **PSHE Association and Unifrog to adapt to meet the needs of our students and local context.**

Timetabling:

- **Years 7-8:** One timetabled PSHE lesson per week
- **Years 9-11:** PSHE taught through bi-weekly lessons
- **Years 12-13:** PSHE delivered through the Inspiration Programme and dedicated PSHE sessions

Curriculum Structure:

The curriculum is organised around three core themes, with content building progressively across key stages:

Core Theme	Key Stage 3	Key Stage 4	Key Stage 5
Health and Wellbeing	Mental wellbeing; physical health and fitness; healthy eating; puberty and adolescent health; drugs, alcohol and tobacco; basic first aid	Mental health conditions; managing stress; sexual health; substance misuse; health and prevention; body image	Mental health in adulthood; managing pressure; long-term health; fertility and reproductive health; accessing healthcare

Relationships	Families and parenting; respectful relationships; online relationships; being safe	Intimate relationships; consent; sexual harassment and violence; healthy and unhealthy relationships; ending relationships	Adult relationships; marriage and civil partnerships; parenting; relationship breakdown; domestic abuse
Living in the Wider World	Rights and responsibilities; community; media literacy; online safety; financial decision-making	Employment rights; financial products; budgeting; gambling; critical thinking; career pathways	Financial planning; workplace skills; independent living; global citizenship; ethical decision-making

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (Secondary):

RSHE is statutory for all secondary students and covers:

By the end of Year 11, students will understand:

- **Families:** Different types of families; marriage and civil partnerships; parenting and the importance of stable relationships
- **Respectful Relationships:** The characteristics of healthy relationships; consent; recognising and reporting abuse; the impact of gender stereotypes
- **Online and Media:** Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online; online risks including grooming and sexual harassment; how information is targeted; pornography
- **Being Safe:** Recognising and managing risk; consent in different contexts; seeking help; FGM and other abuses
- **Intimate and Sexual Relationships:** Sexual health including contraception and STIs; fertility and reproductive health including menstruation, menopause and gynaecological conditions; the law relating to sexual behaviour; the impact of pornography

In line with updated statutory guidance, our curriculum includes enhanced teaching on:

- **Menstrual and gynaecological health:** What is an average period; period problems including premenstrual syndrome, heavy menstrual bleeding, endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS); when to seek help from healthcare professionals
- **Reproductive health:** Facts about fertility and menopause; the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women

- **Puberty and adolescent development:** Physical and emotional changes; brain development in adolescence and implications for decision-making and behaviour

Additional Delivery:

PSHE and RSHE are also delivered through:

- Assemblies addressing PSHE themes
- Educational visits and external speakers (e.g., sexual health professionals, mental health charities, careers advisors)
- Enrichment activities and student leadership opportunities (Student Council, Anti-Bullying Ambassadors, Equality and Diversity Club)
- Tutorial support and pastoral interventions
- Cross-curricular links

Biological Content:

Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the **science curriculum**. Other aspects are included in **Religious Education (RE)**, which explores ethical and moral dimensions of relationships.

Additional Qualifications:

- Some PSHE content is delivered through **Extended Project Qualifications** in Key Stage 5
- Students receive **basic first aid training** from external providers

5.3 Cross-Curricular Integration

PSHE is effectively integrated across the curriculum. While we deliver dedicated PSHE lessons, we recognise that PSHE learning is reinforced and extended through other subjects:

Subject	PSHE Links
English	Exploring relationships, identity and mental health through literature; developing communication and debating skills; media literacy
Mathematics	Financial literacy (budgeting, interest rates, taxes); interpreting health statistics; understanding risk and probability
Science	Puberty, reproduction, contraception and sexual health; drugs, alcohol and addiction; nutrition and exercise; mental health and the brain
PE	Physical and mental health; teamwork and leadership; body image and eating disorders; substance misuse prevention
History	Evolution of gender roles, LGBTQ+ rights, marriage and family structures; political movements and activism

Geography	Climate change and mental health; sustainability and ethical consumption; global citizenship
Religious Education	Ethical debates on relationships, marriage, abortion, euthanasia; moral reasoning; different faith perspectives
Computing	Online safety; cyberbullying; digital footprints; the impact of social media; AI and digital literacy
Media Studies	Body image in advertising; representation and diversity; fake news and misinformation; ethical media consumption
Business Studies	Financial responsibility; workers' rights; ethical leadership; corporate social responsibility
Hospitality and Catering	Healthy eating; nutrition; diet-related diseases

This integrated approach ensures students encounter PSHE themes regularly, deepening their understanding and ability to apply knowledge in different contexts.

5.4 Teaching Strategies

Creating a Safe Learning Environment:

We ensure all PSHE/RSHE lessons provide a safe, respectful space for learning by:

- **Establishing ground rules** at the start of each unit, co-created with students to ensure confidentiality, respect and appropriate boundaries
- **Using distancing techniques** when teaching sensitive topics (such as case studies, scenarios and third-person examples) to protect students' privacy and prevent inappropriate personal disclosures
- **Providing question boxes** for anonymous questions, allowing students to raise concerns privately
- **Ensuring two adults are present** when delivering sex education content for safeguarding purposes

Teaching Methods:

We use participative, interactive teaching methods that engage students and develop skills for real-life situations, including:

- Structured discussion and debate
- Case studies and problem-solving activities
- Group work and peer learning
- Reflection and personal goal-setting
- Age-appropriate multimedia resources

All teaching methods are carefully selected to be age-appropriate, inclusive and sensitive to students' diverse backgrounds and needs.

Safeguarding:

Staff delivering PSHE/RSHE are trained to:

- Recognise disclosures and respond appropriately
- Create a supportive environment where students feel safe to ask questions
- Follow the school's safeguarding procedures if concerns arise
- Signpost students to appropriate support services

Any safeguarding concerns arising from PSHE/RSHE lessons are managed in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

5.5 Differentiation and Assessment

Teaching is differentiated to meet all learners' needs, including those with SEND. Resources reflect diversity and promote inclusion. Progress is monitored through formative assessment, self-reflection and teacher observation. There is no formal grading.

5.6 External Contributors

External agencies (including school nurses, sexual health professionals, mental health services, police and careers advisors) enhance delivery. All are briefed on safeguarding, work alongside staff, and use approved materials.

5.7 Impact, Monitoring and Evaluation

Students develop positive relationships, respect for diversity, resilience, and skills to manage their health and wellbeing. They understand their rights and responsibilities and are prepared for adult life.

Effectiveness is monitored through student and parent feedback, lesson observations, safeguarding data analysis, and annual review by the PSHE lead, SLT and Governors.

6. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

6.1 Our Commitment

The Aylesbury Vale Academy is committed to providing high quality, evidence-based relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) that prepares pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life and promotes their moral, social, mental and physical development. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance RSHE is an essential component of our broad and balanced curriculum and contributes significantly to students' personal development and wellbeing.

We engage meaningfully with students to ensure our RSHE curriculum is relevant, responsive and meets their needs both now and in the future.

6.2 Purpose of This Policy

All schools must have an up-to-date written policy for relationships education or, where they teach sex education, for RSHE. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance It is the statutory responsibility of the Governing Body to ensure this policy is compliant with the latest statutory guidance published in July 2025.

This policy:

- Sets out the organisation, content and approach to teaching RSHE at The Aylesbury Vale Academy
- Supports parents and carers to understand RSHE provision and work in partnership with the school to secure the best outcomes for students
- Demonstrates how the school meets its legal requirements regarding RSE provision
- Provides clarity for staff, governors, pupils and external agencies

6.3 Legal Framework

This policy complies with:

- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, which make relationships and sex education (RSHE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education and health education compulsory in all schools except independent schools Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance
- The Department for Education's statutory guidance "Relationships, Sex and Health Education" (July 2025)
- Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996
- The Equality Act 2010, which requires schools to prevent discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups. The protected characteristics that apply to school-age children are disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance
- Our statutory safeguarding duties as set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Parents' right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE, up to three terms before the child turns 16. From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance

6.4 Policy Development and Links to Other Policies

This policy was developed by the PSHE lead through meaningful consultation with governors, staff, parents and pupils. Parents and carers are welcome to discuss any aspect of this policy or RSHE provision by contacting the school.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Equality Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- PSHE Policy

6.5 Definition of RSHE

RSHE in secondary provides young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. This includes the knowledge they need in later life to keep themselves and others safe, and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies.

Statutory RSHE is delivered through our PSHE curriculum and provides age and developmentally appropriate teaching across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5, enabling students to achieve the RSHE outcomes defined by the DfE by the end of Year 11.

Effective RSHE focuses on respect for oneself and others and does not encourage or normalise early sexual experimentation. By supporting confidence and self-esteem, RSHE will enable young people to make their own choices about whether or when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent, and to resist pressure to have sex.

RSHE teaches students:

- The skills and information needed to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships
- How to keep safe and recognise and manage potential dangers in their online and offline lives
- How to avoid all forms of abusive relationships
- How to report concerns or abuse and where to access help when needed

Sex education involves explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity. Relationships education doesn't involve explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity but can cover sensitive topics such as sexual violence in order to keep children safe. Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance
Sex education is the only aspect of RSHE from which parents/carers can exercise their right to withdraw their child.

6.6 Curriculum Content and Delivery

Statutory Content:

RSHE covers the following statutory content by the end of secondary: Relationships, Sex and Health Education Statutory Guidance

- Families
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Enhanced Content (from September 2026):

In line with updated statutory guidance, our curriculum includes:

- Menstrual and gynaecological health, including what is an average period; period problems such as premenstrual syndrome; heavy menstrual bleeding;

endometriosis; and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS). When to seek help from healthcare professional.

- The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women.
- The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health, and the facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body, including brain development.

Teaching Approach:

We use baseline assessments to understand students' prior knowledge and identify what they would like to learn, ensuring content and delivery is appropriate and relevant. When teaching sensitive topics, teachers use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion, and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

We provide an inclusive curriculum that promotes understanding and mutual respect for all. We reflect diversity within our curriculum to ensure no student feels excluded, and we teach students to respect difference, promote equality and challenge stigma.

6.7 Student Outcomes

High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.

Through our RSHE curriculum, students will:

- Form and maintain positive relationships with peers and adults
- Understand the importance of positive and healthy relationships on their wellbeing
- Recognise what makes a good friendship and how to be a good friend
- Develop strategies to manage the ups and downs of friendships and relationships
- Show respect for others and recognise diversity within relationships, treating others with kindness, consideration and understanding
- Develop positive character traits such as self-respect, kindness, honesty, integrity and resilience
- Positively engage in social action and contribute to the wellbeing of others
- Understand that the principles of positive relationships apply online and know how to keep safe and report concerns
- Recognise the value of family life, marriage and stable loving relationships
- Receive factual, medically accurate knowledge about intimate and sexual relationships, sexual health and consent
- Understand the importance of establishing personal boundaries and privacy

- Recognise the characteristics of abusive relationships and make choices that protect them from harm, including violence and sexual exploitation
- Understand and respect differences and combat all forms of bullying and discrimination
- Recognise unhealthy relationships and inappropriate behaviour, and know how to report concerns with appropriate vocabulary
- Know when and how to seek help from trusted adults and appropriate support services
- Understand the law relating to sexual behaviour and the importance of delaying sexual activity
- Understand that intimate and sexual behaviour should never be entered into as a result of coercion or peer pressure
- Advocate for their own wellbeing and seek support when needed

6.8 Parents' Right to Withdraw from Sex Education

Primary Phase:

Where primary schools provide sex education, head teachers must automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from it, other than content that is taught as part of the science curriculum. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education or health education.

Parents are invited to parent workshops prior to sex education being taught, where they can view the scheme of work, resources and speak to teachers.

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Primary Headteacher.

Secondary Phase:

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance

In secondary, head teachers can refuse a request in exceptional circumstances, for example because of safeguarding concerns or a pupil's specific vulnerability. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance

From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. Relationships and Sex Education Statutory Guidance For example, if a pupil turns 16 during the autumn term, the pupil can opt back into sex education at any time after the start of the previous autumn term.

Withdrawal Process:

Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, it is good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents, and the child if appropriate, to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the

curriculum. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate.

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Principal. The Principal will:

- Acknowledge the request within 2 working days
- Arrange a meeting to discuss the request
- Consider any exceptional circumstances
- Make a decision and inform parents in writing
- Document the process and place a copy in the student's educational record

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

What Parents Cannot Withdraw From:

Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from:

- Relationships Education
- Health Education (including puberty education)
- Any other aspect of PSHE
- Content on human development and reproduction taught in the science curriculum

We strongly encourage all students to receive the full RSHE curriculum to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe and healthy.

6.9 Managing Difficult Questions

Pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. Our policy explains how teachers will handle such questions, with an emphasis on supporting the child.

Students are encouraged to ask questions and raise issues in a respectful and appropriate manner. This may include asking a pupil to speak to their parents or a trusted adult, signposting to support services where needed, and recognising that children whose questions go unanswered might instead turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online.

Some questions may not be appropriately answered in whole-class lessons and will be followed up separately on an individual or group basis. Anonymous question boxes are available for students who do not feel confident asking questions in class or wish to have a separate conversation with a member of staff.

As part of RSE provision, we signpost students to trusted websites and relevant support agencies to encourage them to access safe sources of information and support outside of lessons.

Teachers may require support and training in handling questions that are better not dealt with in the classroom.

6.10 Staff Training

Staff should be trained in safeguarding and offering support, recognising the increased possibility of disclosures.

Staff who deliver PSHE/RSHE receive appropriate training and ongoing support, including:

- Opportunities to view lessons and resources in advance
- Tailored support to meet individual needs
- INSET training and twilight sessions
- One-to-one support from the PSHE lead
- Support and training from external professionals (school nurses, sexual health professionals)
- Access to online, local and national training in accordance with the school's CPD programme

6.11 Confidentiality and Safeguarding

While we aim to create an environment of trust and openness, we cannot offer total confidentiality to pupils. Any personal disclosures made by students or concerns raised by staff will be followed up in accordance with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Two adults are always present in the classroom when delivering sex education content.

For pupils who are experiencing or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships, including at home, schools have an important role as a place of consistency and safety where pupils can find support.

6.12 Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body:

- Ensure the school has a compliant and up-to-date RSHE policy
- Approve the policy
- Hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation

Headteacher/Principal:

- Ensure RSE is taught consistently across the school
- Manage requests regarding the parental right to withdraw from sex education
- Ensure the policy is implemented effectively

PSHE Lead:

- Lead and manage PSHE provision, including statutory RSHE
- Monitor and evaluate RSHE delivery
- Provide support and training to staff
- Liaise with parents and external agencies

Teachers:

- Deliver high-quality RSHE in accordance with this policy
- Create safe, respectful learning environments
- Follow safeguarding procedures
- Engage in relevant training and professional development

Students:

- Engage fully with RSHE
- Treat others with respect
- Follow ground rules
- Ask questions and seek support when needed

6.13 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

RSE provision is monitored and evaluated by the PSHE lead, SLT and Governors in line with the school's monitoring cycle. This includes:

- Student voice surveys and feedback
- Learning walks and lesson observations
- Work scrutiny
- Staff feedback and evaluation
- Analysis of safeguarding data and pastoral concerns
- Parental feedback

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if required by changes in legislation or guidance.

6.14 Working with Parents and Carers

Schools must proactively engage and consult parents when they develop and review their policy, ensuring parents understand that effective RSHE is important for promoting and protecting the wellbeing of all children.

We work in partnership with parents and carers by:

- Consulting on policy development and curriculum content
- Providing opportunities to view curriculum materials on request
- Offering parent workshops before teaching sensitive content
- Communicating through email, letters and parent bulletins
- Welcoming appointments to discuss any aspect of RSHE provision
- Responding to questions and concerns

We recognise that parents are the prime educators for children on many of these matters and aim to complement and reinforce learning at home.

7. Policy Development, Consultation and Review**7.1 Policy Development and Consultation**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students, parents and governors, in line with statutory requirements.

Consultation Process:

Our consultation process involved:

1. **Review of statutory guidance** - The PSHE lead reviewed DfE statutory guidance, national best practice and local authority guidance in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team
2. **Staff and governor consultation** - All teaching staff, support staff and governors were given the opportunity to review the draft policy, view curriculum materials and make recommendations
3. **Parent and carer consultation** - All parents and carers were invited to comment on the planned PSHE/RSHE curriculum provision through:
 - a. Online consultation survey
 - b. Parent information sessions and workshops
 - c. Opportunities to view curriculum materials
 - d. Written feedback via email or letter
4. **Student consultation** - Students were consulted through:
 - a. Student Council discussions on PSHE/RSHE provision
 - b. Year group surveys on what students want to learn
 - c. Feedback on current PSHE delivery
 - d. Anonymous question boxes
5. **Draft review** - The draft policy was reviewed by the Leadership Team and Governing Body, incorporating feedback from all stakeholders
6. **Ratification** - The final policy was approved by the Full Governing Body on 22.05.2026

Ongoing Engagement:

We continue to engage with parents and students throughout the year by:

- Sharing curriculum plans and materials on request
- Offering parent workshops before teaching sensitive content
- Seeking student feedback after each PSHE unit
- Responding to parent queries and concerns
- Consulting on any significant curriculum changes

7.2 Policy Review

Review Cycle:

This policy will be reviewed **annually** by the PSHE lead, Assistant Principal, Leadership Team and Governors, or sooner if required by:

- Changes in legislation or statutory guidance
- Ofsted recommendations
- Significant safeguarding concerns or emerging issues
- Feedback from stakeholders

Review Process:

Each review will include:

- Consultation with staff, students, parents and governors

- Analysis of feedback, concerns and safeguarding data from the previous year
- Review of curriculum effectiveness and student outcomes
- Updates to reflect new statutory guidance, best practice or local needs
- Approval by the Full Governing Body

Approval and Publication:

- The policy is approved by the Full Governing Body
- The policy is published on the school website and available free of charge on request
- All stakeholders are informed of significant changes
- Staff receive training on any policy updates

Next Review Date: May 2027

Current Version: Approved 22.05.2026

Policy Owner: Assistant Principal (PSHE Lead)

Appendix 1 RSHE DfE descriptors

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-secondary>

Full statutory guidance doc (if you want to include)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Appendix 2 - DfE Guide for parents

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812594/RSE secondary schools guide for parents.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812594/RSE_secondary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf) Please note these are available in Arabic, Urdu and Somali