

BOLTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

RELATIONSHIP, HEALTH AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Name of RHSE Coordinator - Rebecca Hodgson

Rebecca is a local specialist teacher of Relationship, Sex and Health Education who has extensive experience delivering this area of the curriculum.

SCHOOL CONTEXT

Bolton Primary School is a small, rural school providing education for children from Nursery/Reception through to Year 6 (ages 3-11).

INTRODUCTION

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. Children need knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe and healthy, to manage relationships positively and respectfully, and to make informed decisions about their wellbeing. Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory in primary schools in England.

This policy outlines our commitment to provide high-quality, evidence-informed Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) for all pupils. It has been updated with regard to the Department for Education's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025), which schools must have regard to, and other relevant statutory guidance and legislation.

RHSE contributes to our statutory duty to safeguard children and prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It is taught in an age- and stage-appropriate, inclusive and carefully sequenced way throughout the school, with teaching adapted to pupils' needs and circumstances.

WHAT IS RHSE?

Relationships, Health and Sex Education (RHSE) is lifelong learning about physical, emotional, mental and social health, relationships and personal development.

We want to be able to provide children and young people with key building blocks of being physically and mentally healthy, understanding relationships, including online contact and good digital wellbeing.

Pupils will learn about physical activity, time outdoors, healthy eating, sleep, self-care, emotions, mental wellbeing, change, loss and bereavement, and how to recognise when they or someone else may need support.

They will also learn about healthy and respectful relationships, families and people who care for them, friendships, boundaries, privacy, personal safety, online safety, bullying, abuse, body development, puberty, menstruation, hygiene and age-appropriate information about human reproduction. Where the school teaches sex education beyond the statutory science curriculum, this will be clearly identified to parents in advance.

In the primary school, we are building the foundations of skills and knowledge that will be developed further at secondary level.

Through delivery of RHSE we aim to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Our key aim is to safeguard our pupils. Throughout their time at Bolton School, children will develop knowledge, understanding and practical skills to help them keep safe, build healthy relationships and embrace the challenges of a happy and successful life. To do this we aim to:

Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and help prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life;

Enable pupils to make responsible and informed decisions and develop communication, decision-making and help-seeking skills;

Develop communication, assertiveness and resilience skills to cope with peer influence, social media and other online influences;

To help and support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development;

To help young people to develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives;

Provide accurate, age-appropriate information and help pupils understand difference, respect themselves and others, and recognise and challenge prejudice and stereotypes;

Use respectful language and challenge sexism, homophobia, discrimination and other forms of prejudice, including derogatory language and bullying;

Help pupils understand that families and relationships can take different forms and that people should be treated with respect and dignity, including same-sex parents and other family arrangements;

Develop resilience, self-esteem and a positive sense of identity, including when responding to influences that may affect body image;

To respect and care for their bodies;

Understand the importance of safe, stable, caring and respectful relationships and know how to recognise when a relationship is unhealthy, unsafe or harmful.

CONTEXT

We teach RHSE in the context of the school's aims, values and whole-school approach to wellbeing, safeguarding, behaviour and inclusion. We recognise that sensitive subjects must be taught carefully, positively and without causing unreasonable alarm. Teaching will be age and stage appropriate, participative and evidence-informed. In particular, we teach RHSE in the belief that:

RHSE is part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process;

children should be taught to have respect for their own bodies;

children should learn about their responsibilities to others, healthy boundaries, consent and the consequences of choices in age-appropriate contexts;

children should know that it is important to build positive relationships with others, involving trust and respect;

RHSE is inclusive and as a school we ensure that it is accessible to all children to promote understanding and respect.

Personal beliefs and attitudes of staff will not influence the teaching of RHSE. Staff will teach the agreed curriculum accurately, sensitively and in line with this policy and safeguarding procedures.

CONTENT

The statutory primary RHSE curriculum is mapped through the school's long-term RHSE programme and curriculum overview. The school will ensure that all statutory Relationships Education and Health Education content is covered by the end of primary. Where sex education is taught beyond statutory science, it will be clearly identified in the curriculum information shared with parents.

From Nursery/Reception and throughout Years 1-6, relevant aspects of RHSE are taught in an age-

and stage-appropriate way. From Year 1 onwards, the curriculum is progressive and carefully sequenced, building pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills year on year across KS1 and KS2. The curriculum will also be delivered through opportunities that are provided beyond the curriculum such as, extra curriculum clubs, School Council, charity events etc.

Assemblies, class workshops and whole-school opportunities may be used to address identified health, wellbeing or safeguarding needs, for example online safety or bullying. RHSE is also supported through PSHE, science, computing/online safety, physical activity and other curriculum areas. Emerging issues may be addressed where appropriate; parents will be informed in advance where teaching represents a significant shift from the published programme and relevant materials will be made available on request.

The statutory and school-specific themes that make up our RHSE framework include:

- Families and people that care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, Kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- General wellbeing
- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harm
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs alcohol and tobacco and vaping
- Health and prevention
- Basic First Aid
- Developing bodies

The detailed year-group curriculum overview identifies when each area is taught and revisited.

The RHSE curriculum is linked to the National Curriculum for Science, Computing and other relevant subjects. A statutory coverage map is included in Appendix 1 of this policy.

Consent, respectful communication and managing conflict in age-appropriate contexts

Bullying, stereotypes, prejudice and respectful behaviour

Parents and carers will be invited to give their views when the RHSE policy is developed and reviewed.

Pupils will also have opportunities to contribute their views about the relevance and accessibility of the curriculum.

Change, loss, bereavement and seeking support for mental wellbeing

Vaccination, dental health, hygiene, sleep, sun safety and prevention of illness

Developing bodies, puberty, menstruation and correct anatomical vocabulary

More details on the lesson content for each year group see appendix 1.

National Curriculum links can be found in appendix 2. The Programme of Study can be found in appendix 3.

The identified person with responsibility for co-ordination is Mrs Rebecca Hodgson, supported by the Headteacher and governing body.

RHSE is taught through dedicated RHSE/PSHE sessions and through relevant learning in Science, Computing and other curriculum areas by class teachers and, where appropriate, the RHSE specialist.

From Year 1 to Year 6 there will be designated sessions each term where pupils focus particularly on RHSE. Sessions are age and stage appropriate and use participative approaches such as discussion, scenarios, circle time, videos, direct teaching and question boxes. Pupils may ask questions anonymously. Teachers will answer questions appropriately and may defer questions that are outside the planned curriculum or not suitable for the classroom, directing pupils to a trusted adult, parent/carer or appropriate source of support where necessary. Parents will be informed in advance about the timing and content of specific RHSE teaching, including any sex education beyond statutory science, and relevant materials will be available to parents on request. Correct medical/anatomical vocabulary will be used where appropriate.

Ground rules will be agreed with pupils to create and maintain a safe, respectful learning environment. Staff will remind pupils that they can speak to a trusted adult if something worries them.

RHSE is delivered through a progressive rolling programme, using high-quality, age-appropriate resources. The school currently uses the Islington Borough Council RHSE materials and Barnardo's Real Love Rocks resources where appropriate; resources are reviewed for suitability, accuracy, accessibility and alignment with this policy and the DfE guidance.

External providers may be used where appropriate. The school will check their suitability and safeguarding arrangements and agree in advance how any safeguarding concern arising during a session will be managed. Parents will be informed about external provision and relevant materials will be made available on request.

Teaching methods include circle time, Philosophy for Children, discussion, scenarios, videos, direct teaching, questioning, reflection and other participative approaches. Sensitive content will be taught using appropriate distancing techniques, ground rules and anonymous question opportunities where helpful.

RHSE discussions are not confidential in the sense of a promise that information will be kept secret. Staff will explain to pupils that information may need to be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or another appropriate adult if there is a concern about a child's safety or wellbeing. If a pupil discloses abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour or another safeguarding concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures immediately. Staff will never promise to keep a disclosure secret and will only share information with those who need to know.

The RHSE programme will be delivered in accordance with the school's Inclusion Policy, Equality Act 2010 and SEND Code of Practice.

The curriculum will represent a wide range of family structures positively and respectfully, including single-parent families, families headed by grandparents, adoptive and foster families, kinship carers, young carers and same-sex parents. Pupils will learn that families and relationships may look different while still being characterised by care, love, safety and respect. Teaching will not stigmatise pupils because of their family circumstances. Staff will challenge discriminatory or derogatory language and behaviour.

CONFIDENTIALITY

PARENTS' RIGHT TO REQUEST WITHDRAWAL FROM SEX EDUCATION

We believe RHSE should be a partnership with parents and carers. The school will engage parents when developing and reviewing this policy, provide clear information about the curriculum, inform parents in advance of sex education content beyond statutory Science, and make relevant curriculum materials available to parents on request.

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all sex education

delivered as part of RHSE. There is no right to withdraw from statutory Relationships Education or Health Education, or from content forming part of the National Curriculum for Science, including statutory content about puberty and sexual reproduction.

Before granting a request to withdraw from sex education, the Headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, the pupil. This discussion will clarify the nature and purpose of the planned teaching and may include the benefits of receiving the education and possible social or emotional effects of withdrawal. The discussion and decision will be recorded.

In a primary school, a request to withdraw will be automatically granted for sex education delivered outside the statutory Science curriculum. Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide appropriate and purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. Parents will be reminded that statutory Science content remains compulsory.

PARENTAL TRANSPARENCY AND ACCESS TO MATERIALS

Parents and carers will be informed about the RHSE curriculum and the content to be taught. They will be given appropriate information about sex education beyond the statutory Science curriculum and will have access to relevant curriculum materials on request.

ACCESSIBILITY AND SUPPORT FOR PUPILS WITH SEND

Individual vulnerabilities and safeguarding needs will be considered when planning and delivering RHSE.

RHSE will be accessible to all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. Teaching will be adapted to pupils' individual needs, communication styles, levels of understanding and vulnerabilities. This may include differentiated language, visuals, repetition, pre-teaching, additional adult support, alternative recording methods, sensory adjustments and smaller-group teaching where appropriate. Staff will consider that some pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to bullying, abuse, exploitation or harmful sexual behaviour and will ensure teaching strengthens their understanding of boundaries, privacy, consent, trusted adults and help-seeking.

EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS

Bolton Primary School is committed to promoting equality, inclusion and respect for all. RHSE will be delivered in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and will foster respect for the protected characteristics of:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

Through RHSE, PHSE and assemblies, pupils will learn about the importance of treating everyone with dignity, kindness and respect. Teaching will help pupils understand that people, families and communities may be different from one another and that discrimination, prejudice and bullying are unacceptable.

Teaching will be age-appropriate and will reflect the diversity of modern Britain. Pupils will learn that families can take many forms and that all children and families should be treated with respect. The school will challenge stereotypes, discriminatory language and prejudice wherever these occur.

RHSE teaching will be inclusive and accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities. Staff will ensure that resources, examples and learning activities support pupils to understand and respect differences while promoting a culture of belonging and equality.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Monitoring of the RHSE policy is the responsibility of the Headteacher and governing body, with day-to-day co-ordination undertaken by the RHSE Coordinator.

A governor is linked to RHSE and will monitor the subject as part of the school's wider curriculum and safeguarding monitoring arrangements.

The school will monitor the effectiveness of RHSE through lesson observations, planning and curriculum reviews, pupil voice, assessment of learning, scrutiny of resources and work, staff feedback, safeguarding information where relevant, and feedback from parents/carers.

The effectiveness of the RHSE programme will be evaluated against pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills and ability to seek help and keep themselves safe. The curriculum will be adapted where evidence, pupil need, safeguarding concerns, local context or changes to statutory guidance indicate that this is necessary.

Governors will monitor the subject regularly and will receive appropriate information about curriculum coverage, impact, resources, parent engagement and any identified development priorities.

This policy will be published on the school website and a copy will be provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

APPENDIX 1 – STATUTORY PRIMARY RHSE COVERAGE

By the end of primary education, Bolton Primary School's planned RHSE curriculum will ensure coverage of the following statutory areas. The detailed year-group curriculum map identifies when each area is introduced, revisited and assessed.

Families and people who care for me: Importance and characteristics of safe, happy and stable family life; different family structures; marriage and civil partnership as legally recognised commitments; recognising when family relationships are unsafe and how to seek help.

Caring friendships: Importance of friendships; welcoming and inclusive behaviour; loneliness; characteristics of healthy friendships; repairing friendships; managing conflict without violence; recognising when a friendship is unsafe or makes a pupil unhappy.

Respectful, kind relationships: Needs and preferences; healthy boundaries; effective communication; assertiveness; managing disappointment and frustration; respect for difference; courtesy and manners; self-respect and self-esteem; bullying and bystander responsibility; stereotypes and how to challenge them; seeking help.

Online safety and awareness: Respectful online relationships; resisting pressure to share information or images; risks from people pupils have never met; fake identities; harmful content/contact; social-media age restrictions; privacy and location settings; permanence of online material; where to seek help.

Being safe: Appropriate boundaries; privacy and safe/unsafe secrets; body autonomy; appropriate and inappropriate contact; responding safely to adults; recognising harmful relationships; reporting abuse and online concerns; trusted adults and persistent help-seeking.

General wellbeing and mental wellbeing: Physical activity, time outdoors, sleep, hobbies, relationships and helping others; emotional vocabulary; proportionate responses; loneliness; bullying and its impact; change, loss and bereavement; recognising when support is needed; common mental health problems and the value of early support.

Wellbeing online: Benefits and risks of internet use; online and offline relationships; screen time; impact of online content; respectful online behaviour; age restrictions; gaming, monetisation, scams and financial harms; critical evaluation of online information; privacy and reporting concerns.

Physical health and fitness: Benefits of an active lifestyle; regular physical activity; risks of inactivity; when and how to seek support.

Healthy eating: Healthy diet and nutrition; healthy relationship with food; planning and preparing healthy meals; risks associated with poor diet, unhealthy weight gain and tooth decay.

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping: Facts about legal and illegal harmful substances; smoking and vaping; nicotine addiction including nicotine pouches; alcohol and drug-related risks.

Health protection and prevention: Signs of physical illness; sun safety; sleep; dental health; personal hygiene and germs; vaccination and immunisation, aligned where appropriate with vaccination programmes.

Personal safety and first aid: Hazards and risk reduction, including fire; road, rail and water safety; making an effective emergency call; basic first aid and responding to common injuries and ailments.

Developing bodies: Growth and the human lifecycle; puberty; correct anatomical vocabulary including penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and nipples; privacy and boundaries; menstrual cycle, physical and emotional changes and preparation for menstruation.

APPENDIX 2 – SEX EDUCATION IN PRIMARY

Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory and are not subject to parental withdrawal. Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools. Where Bolton Primary School teaches sex education beyond statutory Science, it will be age appropriate, clearly identified in the curriculum information sent to parents, and parents will have the right to request withdrawal. Statutory Science content, including required teaching about puberty and sexual reproduction, remains compulsory.

APPENDIX 3 – POLICY AND CURRICULUM GOVERNANCE

Policy owner: RHSE Coordinator / Headteacher

Oversight: Governing Body

Parent and pupil engagement: undertaken as part of policy review and curriculum development

Policy availability: published on the school website and available free of charge on request

Next scheduled review: Autumn 2027, or earlier if required

The school will be transparent with parents about RHSE content and resources. Parents may request to see curriculum materials used to teach RHSE, subject to copyright and safeguarding considerations. Parents will be informed in advance about specific sex education lessons beyond statutory Science and about any significant change to the published RHSE programme arising from an identified need.

This policy was reviewed and updated in September 2026 to reflect the Department for Education's July 2025 statutory guidance. It will be reviewed annually, or sooner where legislation, statutory guidance or school circumstances require.

Staff involved in RHSE will have access to appropriate training, guidance and support so that they have the knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver the curriculum safely and respond appropriately to questions and disclosures. External providers will be expected to demonstrate appropriate expertise and safeguarding arrangements.

APPROVAL AND SIGN-OFF

Policy approved by

Date approved

Chair of Governors

Headteacher

Next review date

Governing Body

22 September 2026

Kate Allison

Debbie Tinkler

Autumn 2027