



Nurturing **Ambition
Through a Living Faith**

Mission Statement

Nurturing ambition through a living faith

Vision Statement

Our academy delivers a purposeful curriculum through its living Christian Faith. We nurture ambition in all of our learners in order for them to become positive citizens of tomorrow.

“Let us not love with words and speech alone but with actions and truth.” — 1 John 3:18

Policy Aims and School Philosophy

Darwen St James' CE Primary Academy strives to develop children into responsible, caring, and active members of the school and wider community within a respectful, nurturing environment. We aim to foster values of mutual understanding, personal resilience, empathy, and ambitious aspirations, preparing pupils to lead safe, healthy, fulfilling, and independent lives.

The aims of PSHE and RSHE at Darwen St James' are:

To ensure RSHE and PSHE are integral parts of a broad, balanced curriculum essential to all-round child development.

To enable pupils to understand the qualities of healthy, respectful relationships based on Christian principles, including the value of family structures, marriage, and lifelong commitments.

To prepare children for healthy, safe relationships in an increasingly digital and online world.

To teach pupils how to stay safe, understand personal boundaries, recognise safe and unsafe touch, and know how to seek help or report abuse.

To help pupils develop a secure, positive identity, self-worth, emotional resilience, confidence, and empathy.

To provide a safe, structured framework in which sensitive, age-appropriate discussions can take place safely.

To prepare pupils for puberty, biological body changes, and physical maturation, giving them an understanding of sexual development and personal hygiene.

To equip pupils with accurate anatomical vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies correctly.

To promote equality, respect diversity, and ensure all pupils accept differences while challenging behaviors and attitudes that exploit or discriminate against others.

Statutory and Legal Framework

This policy has been written in accordance with statutory national guidelines and complies fully with the following legislation and statutory frameworks:

- Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 (mandating Relationships Education in primary schools).
- DfE Statutory Guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (incorporating updated requirements for September 2026).
- Section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and Section 2.5 of the National Curriculum Framework (requiring a balanced, broadly based curriculum promoting physical, mental, and moral wellbeing).
- Section 403 of the Education Act 1996 (duty to have regard to guidance on guidance issued by the Secretary of State).
- Equality Act 2010 (duty to prevent discrimination and promote understanding across Protected Characteristics).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and statutory safeguarding duties.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

This policy unifies our previously separate RSE and PSHE policies into a single cohesive framework. It has been developed through a structured 5-step consultation process involving staff, parents, pupils, and governors:

Step 1: Review — The Subject Leader gathered relevant national DfE updates, diocesan guidance (Church of England Education Office), and local safeguarding advice.

Step 2: Staff Consultation — All teaching and support staff reviewed curriculum maps, resources, and pedagogical approaches.

Step 3: Parent & Stakeholder Engagement — Parents and carers were invited to review teaching materials, complete feedback questionnaires, and attend consultation meetings.

Step 4: Pupil Voice — Pupil consultations were conducted to understand children's existing knowledge, questions, and learning needs.

Step 5: Governor Ratification — Following final amendments, the policy was formally submitted to and ratified by the Local Governing Committee.

KEY CURRICULUM DEFINITIONS

Curriculum Strand	Definition and Scope
Relationships Education STATUTORY	Covers fundamental building blocks of positive relationships including family structures, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online safety, personal boundaries, and staying safe. Mandatory for all primary pupils.
Health Education STATUTORY	Focuses on physical health, mental wellbeing, physical fitness, healthy eating, sleep, dental health, basic first aid, and managing physical/pubertal body changes and emotional health. Mandatory for all primary pupils.
Sex Education NON-STATUTORY (PRIMARY)	Focuses on human reproduction and conception, building on statutory biological science and puberty teaching. Tailored for upper Key Stage 2 (Years 5 and 6). Parents hold the statutory right to request withdrawal.
Science Curriculum STATUTORY NATIONAL CURRICULUM	Biological aspects taught as part of National Curriculum Science: human life cycles, offspring growing into adults, main body parts, and basic human biological changes. Mandatory for all pupils.

SEPTEMBER 2026 STATUTORY CURRICULUM ENHANCEMENTS

KEY 2026 SAFEGUARDING & HEALTH INTEGRATION UPDATES

In accordance with updated Department for Education guidance, our curriculum explicitly integrates enhanced focus across six core domains:

Personal Safety & Risk Management: Structured teaching on travel, road, water, fire, railway, and public disorder safety, alongside evaluating and managing risk in everyday situations.

Mental Health, Grief, and Loss: Age-appropriate learning surrounding change, bereavement, and loss, helping pupils recognize that grief is a normal experience expressed in individual ways.

Anatomical Accuracy & Safeguarding: Clear, progressive use of accurate anatomical terminology for body parts (including genitalia) across key stages to support robust child protection, body autonomy, and disclosure.

Digital Wellbeing & Online Safety: Enhanced focus on AI literacy, digital privacy settings, location tracking, online financial scams/harms, cyberbullying, and managing social pressure around image sharing.

Emotional Resilience & Boundaries: Teaching assertiveness, expressing clear personal boundaries, and managing complex emotional states such as frustration, loneliness, and disappointment.

Equality, Sex, and Gender: Factually and neutrally teaching statutory protections under the Equality Act 2010, legal definitions of biological sex and gender reassignment, ensuring topics are addressed without bias or ideology.

CURRICULUM DELIVERY & STRUCTURE

PSHE and RSHE are delivered through a minimum of 30 minutes dedicated weekly teaching time, supplemented by cross-curricular links, assemblies, and specialized workshops.

Our core framework utilizes the Coram Life Education (SCARF) scheme of work, enhanced by Purple Mash (Computing/Digital Safety), and Kapow Science.

PARENTAL RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

We work in close partnership with parents and carers and maintain complete transparency regarding our curriculum content:

Relationships Education & Health Education: These are statutory requirements under DfE guidance.

Parents do not have the legal right to withdraw their child from any part of Relationships or Health Education.

National Curriculum Science: Parents cannot withdraw their child from statutory Science lessons (including biological lifecycles and human development).

Primary Sex Education (Non-Statutory Y5/Y6): Parents maintain the statutory right to request that their child be withdrawn from the discrete, non-statutory elements of Sex Education (specifically human reproduction and conception) taught in Years 5 and 6.

Withdrawal Procedure: Any parent wishing to request withdrawal from non-statutory Sex Education must contact the school office to arrange a consultation meeting with the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss the request, explain the statutory curriculum content, provide context on how topics are taught, and outline the alternative provision arranged for the child during those specific lessons.

SAFE TEACHING, DISTANCING & MANAGING SENSITIVE QUESTIONS

RSHE lessons create a safe, supportive environment where pupils feel safe to learn and express thoughts honestly. Staff employ the following pedagogical principles:

Ground Rules: Every class establishes clear rules for discussion (e.g., mutual respect, listening, no personal questions).

Distancing Techniques: Case studies, role-play, anonymous question boxes, and fictional scenarios are used so pupils can explore sensitive issues without disclosing personal information.

Managing Unscripted / Difficult Questions: If a pupil asks an explicit or sensitive question outside the scope of the primary curriculum, teachers will acknowledge the question neutrally. Staff will explain that the topic is not covered in school and advise the child to discuss it with their parent/carer. The school will inform parents when such questions arise.

Excluded Topics in Primary RSHE

Darwen St James' CE Primary Academy has decided not to teach about or answer questions on explicit adult topics, including: rape, oral sex, exploitative or violent sexual practices, incest, abortion, prostitution, contraception, masturbation, or forms of sexual intercourse (including homosexual practices or foreplay). HIV/ AIDS issues are addressed only in an age-appropriate, sensitive manner if encountered in statutory health learning.

Confidentiality & Safeguarding Procedures

Staff cannot offer absolute confidentiality to any pupil. If a child makes a disclosure or asks a private question indicating they may be at risk of abuse, harm, or exploitation, staff will immediately follow the school's Child

Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report concerns directly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff will reassure the pupil that any action taken will always prioritize their safety and wellbeing.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Committee

The Governing Committee holds overall legal oversight, approves this policy, and holds the Headteacher accountable for its effective implementation and monitoring.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring RSHE/PSHE is taught in a carefully sequenced, compliant manner, managing parental withdrawal requests, and ensuring staff receive appropriate training and resources.

PSHE & RSHE Subject Leaders (Mrs H Corbally & Miss Peckson)

The Subject Leaders oversee curriculum delivery, monitor teaching quality, support staff, maintain resources, and review policy effectiveness annually.

Teaching & Support Staff

Staff are responsible for delivering the curriculum with sensitivity, modeling positive Christian values, upholding neutral/objective standards, responding to individual needs, and referring safeguarding concerns to the DSL. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching statutory RSHE.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in PSHE and RSHE lessons, treat peers and teachers with respect, follow class ground rules, and demonstrate sensitivity during discussions.

STAFF TRAINING & QUALITY ASSURANCE MONITORING

Staff undergo regular professional development on RSHE delivery, safeguarding integration, and managing sensitive discussions through staff meetings, INSET days, Diocesan training, and external courses.

When external professionals (e.g., school nurses, emergency services, health workers) assist with delivery, their input is vetted beforehand. Visitors must adhere strictly to school policy and reflect our Christian ethos.

Monitoring Framework: Delivery and standards are evaluated continuously through:

Regular learning walks and peer observations.

Pupil voice interviews and self-reflection reviews.

Planning scrutinies and PSHE Padlet / work book sampling.

Annual policy and curriculum review by the Governing Body.