Forge Valley School & Sixth Form

Sex & Relationships Policy

Policy version control

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Version	Section	Amendments	Date	Authors
April 2024	6, 8 & 10	Updates to sections	April 2025	E Shaw
April 2026	N/A	No changes made in April 2026 but policy will be reviewed again in Sept 2026 in line with the new guidance and curriculum structure.		E Shaw
Sept 2026	1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 9	Amendments to bring in line with new statutory guidance and to refer parents to the guidance rather than list content within the policy	Sept 2026	EShaw

1. Introduction

Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. 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. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right.

2. Aims

The school aims to prepare young people for an adult life in which they can:

- Develop positive values and an understanding of the law that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour.
- Understanding of the Equality Act 2010
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex and how to prevent unwanted pregnancy.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want.
- To clearly understand consent and clear boundaries.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from unintended/unwanted conceptions, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others.
- To understand key information around grooming and prevention.
- Avoid being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- Access confidential sexual health advice, support and if necessary treatment; and know how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- Understand how to build appropriate, healthy and positive relationships.
- Students will know the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion and harassment.
- The laws related to online activity of a sexual nature including, pornography, online sexual exploitation/extortion, non-consensual image sharing, online

3. Guidelines for Governors and Staff

As well as fulfilling their legal obligations, the governing boards or management committee should also make sure that:

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

4. Subject Leader for PHSE / Personal Development

Is responsible for the planning and development of the Personal Development curriculum, which includes RSE delivered at an age-appropriate time.

The Subject Leader for PSHE/Personal Development is Emma Shaw, who can be contacted via email eshaw2@forgevalley.sheffield.sch.uk

5. Teaching Staff are Responsible for:

- Presenting the facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within the framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour
- Encouraging pupils to recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour and to accept that both sexes must behave reasonably in sexual matters
- Encouraging pupils to appreciate the values of family life.

6. The Role of Parents

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents wishing to withdraw their child from sex education must notify the Subject Leader for PSHE/Personal Development in writing. The school will contact the parents concerned and ask if they would indicate voluntarily their reasons for withdrawal so that any misunderstandings about the nature of sex education provided by the school can be resolved.

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. 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. Schools should ensure that pupils know they have this option.

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.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Parents are consulted on the Personal Development curriculum, including SRE. This provides valuable insight into the matters concerning our local community and allows us to strengthen out curriculum to meet the specific needs of our learners.

The last parent consultation took place in May 2026.

7. Content of RSE

The statutory guidance sets out the required content for RSE and can be found via this link on pages 14 to 19.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6970e7e67e827090d02d42e0/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education__RSE__and_health_education__for_intro_1_September_2026_.pdf

In addition to this the guidance requires us to teach about the Law as it relates to the following areas

- marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
- consent, including the age of consent
- domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty
- sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour
- the Online Safety Act

- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc, and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse including grooming and sextortion
- pornography
- abortion
- protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)
- alcohol, smoking, vaping and nicotine products and illicit drug use
- gambling
- carrying knives and weapons
- extremism/radicalisation
- grooming or exploiting children into criminal activity, which can include gang involvement and county lines drug running
- hate crime
- the age of criminal responsibility

8. Process

In year 7, 8, 10 and 11 RSE forms part of the wider Personal Development curriculum and is delivered through 1-hour weekly lessons delivered by subject specialist staff. In year 12 and 13 Personal Development is delivered by form tutors in weekly form time sessions.

The curriculum is designed with consideration for;

- Current government guidance on RSHE
- Current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance
- The needs of our community based on safeguarding knowledge
- Parental voice obtained through consultation at our community panel meetings
- Pupil voice obtained through the schools QA process

We do not deliver any lessons which are solely sex education. All lessons are about the dynamics within intimate relationships and intimate/sexual health.

The curriculum and its delivery are subject to the whole school process of monitoring and evaluation.

Details of the Personal Development curriculum, including a breakdown of what is taught when for each year group, can be found on the school website
https://forgevalley.school/curriculum/subjects/personal-development

There are currently no lessons which are classified as 'sex education'. All lessons are about healthy relationships and sexual health.

Provision for pupils with SEND is address primarily through quality first teaching. The majority of pupils attend mainstream lessons and are supported by their Teacher or Teaching Assistant to access learning. Where pupils attend a different provision, the Subject Leader works with colleagues to ensure effective provision in line with statutory guidance. Any concerns relating to a pupil with SEND would be discussed with the key worker and plans made for additional/over

learning to aid their understanding. The safeguarding team will be consulted in line with the whole school policy.

Visitors and Outside Agencies

We do not currently use any outside agencies in the delivery of RSE.

9. Visitors and Outside Agencies

There are no anticipated statutory changes to the curriculum.

The Subject Leader in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Headteacher and other Senior Leaders may make changes to curriculum, at any time, to respond to an emerging need within the school community.

10. Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Any SRE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, in an age appropriate manner. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

Teachers are advised to encourage a pupil asking for specific advice on family planning or other aspects of sexual behaviour to seek advice from their parents, and if appropriate from the relevant health service professionals.

Where the teacher believes that a pupil has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place them at physical risk or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general responsibility to ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications and the pupil is urged to inform their parents and/or seek professional advice. The member of staff cannot promise confidentiality to the pupil and where there is a risk that a teacher might be compromised by speaking to individual pupils, they are advised that it would be wiser to be accompanied by another member of staff. In all cases members of staff should inform a member of the school's Safeguarding Team.

Guidance in cases of suspected child abuse is clearly defined in the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Prior to a new topic being delivered, the Subject Leader for PSHE/Personal Development consults with the Designated Safeguarding Lead to highlight and discuss any pupils who may have been affected by upcoming topics and themes. These pupils are spoken to jointly by the Subject Leader for PSHE/Personal Development and Designated Safeguarding Lead and families are also notified if necessary. Families do have the right to remove their child from lessons.