

Title and Description	Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
Date of last review	March 2026
Approved by	Local Governing Board
To be reviewed by	PDBA Sub-Committee
Responsibility	Curriculum Lead for PSHE
Review period	Bi-Annually
Date of next review	March 2027

Below is an AI generated summary of the full policy, produced to help make this document more accessible. The summary has been checked for accuracy, but the full policy remains the only completely accurate version.

Purpose and Aims of RSE

RSE is described as lifelong learning about physical, emotional, moral, and social development.

Key aims include enabling students to:

- Develop healthy, respectful, caring relationships (on and offline).
 - Understand puberty, sexual development, and sexual health.
 - Learn about consent and the law, including sexual offences and online risks.
 - Build self-esteem, empathy, confidence, and communication skills.
 - Recognise healthy vs unhealthy relationships.
 - Challenge harmful attitudes and behaviours (e.g., misogyny, exploitation, harmful digital subcultures).
 - Make informed, safe choices, including contraception and protection.
 - Understand grief, loss, and emotional wellbeing.
 - Understand diversity in family structures and promote equality and dignity.
-

Underpinning Principles

RSE should:

- Be inclusive, age-appropriate and evidence-informed.
 - Support loving, respectful relationships and family life in all forms.
 - Encourage open discussion without stigma.
 - Use correct, inclusive anatomical vocabulary.
 - Involve parents as key partners.
 - Reflect safeguarding as a central priority.
-

Statutory Framework

The policy complies with:

- 2019 DfE RSHE guidance (in force until Aug 2026)
- Revised RSHE guidance (July 2025) – statutory from Sept 2026
- Equality Act 2010, Children & Social Work Act 2017, KCSIE, SEND Code of Practice, and other national reports.
- RSE links with safeguarding, online safety, anti-bullying, and equality policies.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

Framwellgate School Durham: Ethos and Values Statement

Like all good schools, we're driven by our values above all else. We define these as:

Excellence - Everyone in our community will know and experience success

The most for those that need the most - We will meet the needs of all our learners

Known and valued - Everyone here will be celebrated for who they are and what they do

Collective endeavour - We will achieve success together

Joy - Everyone will know and create joy

These five values determine all that we do, and every part of the school flows from them. They set the direction and act as a compass to ensure we continue to grow and develop as a school in the way that we feel best supports all our students.

British Values

All staff are expected to uphold and promote fundamental British Values including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

Aims of Relationship and Sex Education

Our programme is inclusive, age-appropriate, evidence-informed and designed to support the physical, emotional and social development of all students. RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, family life, and respect. It involves acquiring information, developing essential skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. Through RSE, students develop the knowledge, skills and values needed to build healthy relationships, stay safe, and make informed choices about their wellbeing.

The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of relationships and sex education.

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of sexual health and hygiene
- Promote physical, emotional and mental wellbeing
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Support students to develop respectful, caring relationships
- Help students recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships, including those taking place online
- Enable students to identify and challenge harmful attitudes and behaviours, including misogyny and harmful digital subcultures
- Understand consent and the laws around consent and sexual offences, including those occurring online

- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex including violence in teenage relationships
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves in a variety of situations including from exploitation, abuse and violence, uninvited/unwanted conceptions, and sexually transmitted infections including HIV
- Teach students to communicate effectively in relationships and to use the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Provide accurate knowledge about human sexuality and reproduction
- Develop skills to stay safe online and offline
- Prepare students for adult responsibilities and family life
- Understand grief, loss, loneliness and emotional wellbeing
- Promote equality, inclusivity, dignity and respect for others and challenge sexism and prejudice
- Make students aware of sources of help for all young people and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary

RSE gives young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, including online and not just intimate relationships, and provides a clear progression from what is taught in primary school in Relationships Education.

1. Underlying Principles

We believe that RSE should be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life. It should be set within a wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, and knowledge and openness. It should include an acceptance of families in all their forms. We will encourage students and teachers to share and listen to each other's views and the right to hold/ express views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual identity, and will not promote any particular family structure. We understand the importance of using the correct anatomical and inclusive terminology. The important values are love, respect, kindness and generosity and care for each other. We seek to generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment. We also recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, growing up and sex. We aim to work in partnership with parents, carers and students, consulting them about the content of programmes. This policy and information on what will be taught and when will be freely available on our school website for parents to access. We recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with other health and education professionals. A safeguarding first approach is embedded in the planning and delivery of our RSE curriculum

2. Relevant policies and publications

This policy complies with the DfE **2019 RSHE statutory guidance** (in force until **31 August 2026**) and incorporates all requirements of the **revised guidance published July 2025**, which becomes statutory from **1 September 2026**.

This policy follows relevant legislation and guidance as follows:

- DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance, July 2025
- Children and Social Work Act, 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- Supplementary Guidance Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) for the 21st Century, 2013
- Equality Act, 2010
- Not Yet Good Enough: Personal, social health and economic education in schools, Ofsted 2013
- Special Educational Needs and Disability code of practice: 0-25 years, 2017
- Life Lessons: PSHE and SRE in schools: Fifth Report, House of Commons Education Committee, 2015
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2024/25
- Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision, Green Paper, July 2018

This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's online safety policy, anti-bullying policy, child protection & safeguarding policy, and our equality, diversity & community cohesion policy.

3. What will Relationships and Sex Education include?

There will be three main elements to our Relationships and Sex Education teaching. Students will learn:

Attitudes and Values

- the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices
- the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, and marriage/civil partnerships
- the nurture of children and successful parenting
- the value of and demonstrating respect, love and care
- about exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- about developing critical thinking as part of decision-making
- to challenge myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour

Personal and Social Skills

- to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively including on and offline
- to develop self-respect and empathy for others
- to develop positive self-esteem and confidence
- to develop emotional wellbeing and resilience
- how to make informed choices with an absence of prejudice
- to develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- about managing conflict
- to develop the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)
- how to report concerns of abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence to do so

Knowledge and Understanding

- to understand physical, emotional and spiritual development at appropriate stages
- to understand human sexuality, identity, reproduction, menstruation, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- about contraception, sexually transmitted infections and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
- to understand and appreciate positive, healthy and enjoyable relationships
- to understand grief, loss and loneliness
- about the avoidance of an unintended pregnancy;
- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, including coercive control and financial abuse, stalking, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, 'virginity testing', hymenoplasty and how these can affect current and future relationships

- the key facts about puberty, the changes in the adolescent body (including physical and emotional) and menstrual wellbeing (Health Education)
- to recognise and challenge misogyny, online misogynistic influencers, incel ideology, and harmful digital subcultures
- to understand the impact of pornography, at an individual and societal level, including AI-generated deepfakes pornography and digital manipulation
- to identify and learn from positive healthy role models
- where to go for help and advice and how to access local and national services

4. Organisation and Content of Relationship and Sex Education

Framwellgate School Durham specifically delivers Relationship and Sex Education through its Personal development programme, and through RE and Science lessons at KS3 and KS4. Teachers/-tutors deliver the PSHE Curriculum with support from professionals where appropriate. Tutors work closely with their tutees and we believe that they are usually the best people to work with the students on many of the RSE topics as they are aware of each student's individual circumstances. RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included. The national curriculum in science is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten. The Personal Development programme and Science National Curriculum is delivered in every year group.

RSE lessons sometimes consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons, a group agreement, formerly known as 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, within the group agreement established at the start of the sessions. 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 a more appropriate time.

More expert or specialist teachers and other professionals may support staff with teaching certain aspects of the curriculum. Clarity in the role and provision of staff will be stipulated through our partner working agreement. Support and professional development will be provided for these staff, so that they can develop the confidence in delivering the whole of the RSE programme.

The stage at which topics are taught adheres to statutory guidance. Teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the students including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Students will be assessed via end-of-unit knowledge tests, which are completed electronically. The results of these tests are monitored, and any identified misconceptions or gaps in knowledge are addressed.

Students and staff are consulted regularly on the RSE curriculum.

5. Inclusion

Acknowledging the increased vulnerability of disadvantaged students

We recognise that some students — particularly those experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage, adverse childhood experiences, or limited access to supportive networks — may face an elevated risk of unhealthy or harmful relationships, exploitation, and unsafe online or offline situations. As part of our RSE provision, we are committed to proactively identifying and responding to these heightened vulnerabilities by offering tailored support, targeted interventions where appropriate, and equitable access to high-quality, inclusive, and preventative education. This may include coordinated involvement from the pastoral team, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), and relevant external agencies. Through this approach, we ensure that all students — especially those

disproportionately affected by safeguarding risks — develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence they need to stay safe, build healthy relationships, and seek trusted help when needed.

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it may not be culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular topics in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Students with Special Educational Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive RSE and where appropriate, we will offer adaptations to meet the particular needs of students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Gender, Identity and Sexual Orientation

RSE is inclusive of LGBTQ+ students, while ensuring legal accuracy and adhering to DfE guidelines:

- Biological sex and gender reassignment are taught as legal facts
- Gender identity is not taught as unquestioned fact
- Harmful gender ideologies, including those online, are addressed

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with regard to gender, sexual orientation and identity, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing identity and sexuality need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them.

Family Structures

Diverse family structures are explicitly represented, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

6. Right to Withdraw Students from Relationships and Sex Education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some parts of sex education, (not relationship education), delivered as part of statutory RSE. It is good practice for the Head Teacher or delegated representative to discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child, to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, the benefits of receiving the important information, and the possible detrimental effects that the withdrawal might have. A record is to be kept of enquiries, meetings and outcomes.

In exceptional circumstances the school will respect the parent's request, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point the student can choose to attend RSE. A child's special educational needs should not be a consideration for the Head Teacher to grant a parental request, apart from in exceptional circumstances. Parents are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses.

7. Transparency

Parents/carers are **able to see** RSE curriculum and materials on request. We will publish an overview on our website and provide sample resources in consultation events, in line with DfE expectations regarding **openness with parents**.

8. Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

It should be made clear to students that teachers and all adults in school cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality if they have any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a child and they will always act on these concerns. This should be made clear when forming the class Group Agreement and students will be reminded of the name of the designated safeguarding lead at this point, and at the end of all RSE lessons. The following points should be noted:

Young People under the age of 13 years

A child under 13 is not legally capable of consenting to sexual activity. Any offence under The Sexual Offences Act 2003 involving a child under 13 is very serious and should be taken to indicate a risk of significant harm to the child. Cases involving under 13s should always be discussed with the DSL. A referral will be made to First Contact and/or the Police to discuss the appropriate next steps. All incidents should be fully documented on CPOMS.

Young people between 13 – 16 years

Sexual Activity with a young person in this age group is a criminal offence under the Sexual Offences Act 2003. The Act reinforces that whilst mutually agreed, non-exploitive, nor coercive sexual activity between teenagers does take place and that often no harm comes from it, the legal age of consent remains 16. This acknowledges that this group of young people is still vulnerable, even when they do not view themselves as such. Recent changes in law around consent places the emphasis on proving that consent is secured by the person initiating sex, and not the assumption that it has been obtained from the other person. This is based on them being free, able, and have the capacity to give consent, and that on each occasion it is negotiated and agreed.

In cases of sexual activity involving 13-15 year olds, staff should refer to the DSL. The DSL will determine whether a referral will need to be made to First Contact and/or the Police to discuss appropriate next steps. In any circumstances where issues of abusive, coercive or exploitative behaviour are suspected within relationships (even if the students are 16 years or above) staff must inform the DSL who will make appropriate referrals. All incidents will be documented on CPOMS.

Codes of Conduct

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct and have a duty to share information with relevant others, if they believe that a child is suffering abuse.

Fraser Guidelines: The Fraser guidelines help people who work with children to balance the need to listen to children's wishes with the responsibility to keep them safe.

Fraser guidelines relate to a 1985 judgement in the House of Lords on a legal case which looked specifically at whether doctors should be able to give contraceptive advice or treatment to under 16-year-old girls without parental consent. Since then, they have been more widely used to help assess whether a child has the maturity to make their own decisions and to understand the implications of those decisions.

Adults working or volunteering with children in any context need to consider how to balance children's rights and wishes with their responsibility to keep children safe from harm. Key issues to bear in mind include:

- The child's safety is paramount. Child protection concerns must always be shared with the relevant agencies, even if this goes against the child's wishes.
- Underage sexual activity is a possible indicator of child sexual exploitation and children who have been groomed may not realise they are being abused.
- Sexual activity with a child under 13 is a criminal offence and should always result in liaison with Children's Services

These procedures should be read in conjunction with the Durham Safeguarding Children's Partnership protection procedures with special reference to Sections 3 'Referral and Investigation' and Section 6.13 'Sexually Active Children under 18'

9. Roles and Responsibilities

The Local Governing Board will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation and impact. They will oversee the review, organisation and revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy.

The **Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that the policy is implemented effectively

It is the responsibility of the **Curricular Lead for PSHE** to oversee and organise the monitoring, quality assurance and evaluation of PSHE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The PSHE programme will be treated as a subject department in this exercise, under which all departments undertake yearly self-evaluation. Student and staff voice will be used for baseline and follow up evaluation to feed into the review process. Regular line management will be carried out by the **Headteacher**.