Harlow Fields School & College Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

POLICY TITLE:	**Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy**
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COMMITTEE:	FGB
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Signed by the FGB:	Paula Violet

1. Policy Statement

At Harlow Fields School & College, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) forms a vital part of our curriculum and safeguarding provision.

Our RSHE curriculum supports pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to:

- build positive and respectful relationships
- understand their bodies and personal development
- maintain physical and emotional wellbeing
- develop independence and life skills
- recognise and respond to risks
- prepare for adulthood

As a specialist setting supporting pupils with a wide range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), RSHE is delivered in a carefully adapted and developmentally appropriate way to ensure all pupils can access learning in a safe, respectful and supportive environment.

Our approach promotes dignity, respect, inclusion and personal safety, ensuring pupils are equipped with the knowledge and confidence needed to navigate relationships and the wider world.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with statutory guidance including:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Equality Act 2010
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework
- SEND Code of Practice

Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory for all pupils.

Parents retain the right to request withdrawal from the non-statutory elements of sex education delivered outside of the science curriculum.

This policy should be read alongside the **Harlow Fields RSHE Curriculum Handbook**, which outlines the detailed curriculum implementation and progression across the school.

3. Aims of RSHE

The RSHE curriculum aims to:

- Support pupils to develop positive relationships based on respect, empathy and understanding
- Promote emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Teach pupils about personal safety and safeguarding
- Develop understanding of physical development and puberty
- Promote healthy lifestyles and self-care
- Support communication, consent and personal boundaries
- Develop understanding of different family structures and relationships
- Prepare pupils for independence and adulthood

RSHE also plays a significant role in helping pupils to:

- recognise safe and unsafe situations
- understand consent and personal boundaries
- communicate worries and seek help
- identify trusted adults

4. RSHE within the Curriculum

RSHE is delivered as part of the school's wider Personal Development and PSHE curriculum.

Learning may take place through:

- curriculum-based learning across subject areas
- themed learning days
- assemblies and whole-school events
- cross-curricular opportunities
- small group sessions
- individualised teaching where appropriate

Biological aspects of RSHE are also delivered through the science curriculum within the semi-formal pathway. The topic of ‘our bodies’ is explored through the sensory pathway.

The school primarily delivers RSHE through **whole-school themed learning days**, supported by assemblies, curriculum links and targeted interventions.

This approach reflects the needs of pupils with SEND, recognising that many pupils benefit from:

- immersive learning experiences
- repetition and overlearning
- practical and experiential learning
- consistent whole-school messages

Themed days allow pupils to explore key themes in depth while ensuring accessibility across all pathways.

5. Curriculum Content

The RSHE curriculum covers three key areas in line with statutory guidance. Content is delivered in an age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate manner, reflecting pupils' cognitive development, communication needs and lived experiences.

Relationships Education

Pupils learn about:

- friendships and positive relationships
- family relationships and support networks
- respect, kindness and empathy
- trust and honesty
- communication and cooperation
- consent and personal boundaries
- different types of relationships
- online relationships and digital safety

Health Education

Pupils learn about:

- physical health and wellbeing
- personal hygiene and self-care
- emotional wellbeing and mental health
- healthy lifestyles and choices
- body awareness and development
- puberty and body changes

- personal independence and self-management

Sex Education

Age and developmentally appropriate learning may include:

- human reproduction
- conception and birth
- intimate relationships
- consent and responsibility
- sexual health and wellbeing

Sex education is delivered sensitively and in a manner appropriate to pupils' developmental stage and communication needs. At Harlow Fields School & College, the more detailed elements of sex education are typically delivered from Year 10 onwards and within the Sixth Form provision, where pupils are developmentally ready to explore these themes in greater depth as part of their preparation for adulthood.

However, where pupils display sexualised behaviours or require additional support to understand personal boundaries, consent or appropriate relationships, targeted teaching may take place earlier or across other areas of the school. These sessions are carefully adapted and delivered in a supportive and developmentally appropriate way to ensure pupils understand personal safety, dignity and respectful behaviour.

6. Adaptation for SEND

As a specialist setting, RSHE is adapted to ensure accessibility for all pupils.

Teaching approaches may include:

- visual supports and symbol systems
- communication aids and core boards
- sensory learning experiences
- repetition and reinforcement
- structured teaching approaches
- social stories and modelling
- small group or individual teaching
- adapted language and accessible resources

Content is delivered in a way that respects pupils' cognitive development, communication needs and emotional readiness.

7. Preparation for Adulthood

RSHE contributes significantly to pupils' preparation for adulthood.

Learning supports pupils to develop:

- independence skills
- self-care and personal hygiene
- understanding of relationships
- community safety awareness
- emotional regulation
- communication and self-advocacy

For older pupils and Sixth Form learners, RSHE may also include:

- managing relationships
- personal safety in the community
- understanding rights and responsibilities
- maintaining physical and emotional wellbeing
- work-related learning and independence

8. Safeguarding

RSHE plays an important role in safeguarding pupils.

Teaching supports pupils to:

- recognise unsafe or inappropriate behaviour
- understand personal boundaries
- identify trusted adults
- communicate concerns
- recognise online risks
- understand consent and autonomy

All safeguarding concerns arising from RSHE lessons will be managed in line with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff delivering RSHE are trained to respond appropriately to disclosures or concerns and will follow safeguarding protocols where necessary.

RSHE also supports pupils to understand and recognise harmful behaviours including sexual harassment, exploitation, coercion and abuse, and to know how to seek support if they feel unsafe.

9. Parent and Carer Partnership

We recognise the important role parents and carers play in supporting their child's development.

Parents and carers are informed about the RSHE curriculum and may discuss the content with school staff.

Parents have the right to request withdrawal from the non-statutory elements of sex education delivered outside of the science curriculum.

If a pupil is withdrawn, the school will respect this request up until three terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education rather than remain withdrawn, the school will make appropriate arrangements for this to take place in line with statutory guidance.

Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher and will be considered in accordance with statutory guidance.

10. Staff Training

Staff delivering RSHE receive appropriate training and support to ensure they feel confident delivering the curriculum.

Training may include:

- safeguarding awareness
- communication strategies
- SEND-specific teaching approaches
- responding to disclosures
- managing sensitive discussions appropriately

Staff are supported to deliver RSHE in a way that promotes dignity, respect and inclusion.

11. Monitoring and Evaluation

The delivery and effectiveness of RSHE is monitored through:

- curriculum monitoring and review
- lesson observations and learning walks
- pupil engagement and participation

- assessment evidence and progress tracking
- safeguarding monitoring
- feedback from pupils, staff and families

The policy will be reviewed annually by the governing board to ensure continued compliance with statutory guidance and alignment with the school's curriculum.

12. RSHE Curriculum Handbook

The detailed structure, teaching approaches and progression of the RSHE curriculum are outlined within the **Harlow Fields RSHE Curriculum Handbook**.

The handbook includes:

- curriculum progression across pathways
- themed learning structures
- safeguarding links
- pathway-specific adaptations
- assessment and evidence guidance
- links to cultural capital, British Values and SMSC

The handbook supports staff to implement RSHE consistently and effectively across the school.