



**Shaw
Education
Trust**

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY

(Updated for 2026)

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Approved by: Academy Council / Executive Headteacher

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1. Policy Statement and Ethos

1.1 Terms of Reference

This Policy has been written for all staff at Pine Green Academy, pupils and parents/carers. All staff should be aware of this policy, particularly those who will be delivering or supporting the delivery of Relationships Education, or the Relationships and Sex Education programme. Whilst pupils will not be familiar with the detail, they will be made aware of any relevant content.

Copies of this Policy may be obtained from:

- School Website
- Reference copy in the main School Office
- Staff Shared Area

1.2 Legislation

This policy will be compliant with the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (2026) (Updated yearly)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- Education Act (1996) (2002)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- SEND Code of Practice (0-25 years)
- DfE Statutory guidance on: relationships education; relationships and sex education (RSE); and health education (last updated Dec 2025)
- National curriculum in England: science programmes of study 2015
- Safeguarding and Pupil Protection Policy and procedures
- Confidentiality/Data Protection Policy and procedures
- Behaviour Policy and procedures
- Anti-bullying Policy and procedures
- Prevent Policy and procedures
- Online/E-Safety Policy and procedures

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy and procedures
- Equality Objectives Policy and procedures

1.3 Aims and principles

Children and young people are growing up in a progressively complex world and are increasingly living their lives both on and offline. This provides many positive and exciting opportunities for them, but also may present challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way, both on and offline. This is why the Department for Education has made Relationships Education compulsory in all Primary Schools, and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools. At Pine Green Academy, this is delivered as part of a wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum.

N.B.: In the most recent Government Guidance (see appendix 1), Sex Education continues to not be compulsory in Primary schools (although it is recommended that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science); therefore, where the specific term 'RSE' is used throughout this policy, this is in reference to our Secondary phase only.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is defined as:

Learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage and other meaningful relationship choices for family life - stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health.

This expression – RSE – is used to stress that our approach goes beyond provision of basic biological information to also focus on clarifying attitudes and values, and developing self-esteem and the skills to manage healthy and appropriate relationships. Care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of young people based on their home circumstances or personal choices.

Teaching within our Primary phase will focus on families and people who care for us, healthy friendships, respectful relationships and being safe, both in person and online. The fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships are developed, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of primary school, building on early education, pupils will be taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy. Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact – these are the forerunners of teaching about consent, which takes place at Secondary.

For primary pupils, the updated 2025 guidance places a stronger focus on online safety and wellbeing, the use of accurate terminology for body parts (including genitalia), and the introduction of personal safety around water, roads, and railways. There's also greater emphasis on helping children understand change and loss, including bereavement, and on developing communication skills, assertiveness, and the confidence to express personal needs and boundaries.

Teaching within our Secondary phase will build on the knowledge acquired at Primary level and aims to develop further pupils' understanding of healthy and safe relationships of all kinds, as well as introducing developmentally and age-appropriate knowledge about intimate relationships and sex, including how to recognise potential risk and be able to make informed choices to keep themselves safe. The subject content in both phases will give our pupils the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves, and the confidence to know when and where to turn for support if problems should ever arise. Pine Green Academy is aware that some of our pupils may be particularly vulnerable and have an increased risk in relation to sexual activity and unhealthy relationships, so in line with the pastoral responsibility, staff will be particularly conscious of their welfare and any early intervention that is necessary to ensure their health and wellbeing.

For secondary pupils, new content in the 2025 guidance includes AI literacy, while personal safety now extends to topics such as knife crime and conflict resolution. There's a much stronger focus on tackling misogyny, incel culture, and their influence on attitudes toward women and girls, as well as recognising how these issues can negatively affect boys and young men. The guidance also explores the impact of pornography and introduces more detailed learning about menstrual and gynaecological health, including conditions like endometriosis and menopause. Finally, there's a greater emphasis on equipping pupils with the skills and confidence to access healthcare services when they need them.

Whilst we use RSE to inform young people about sexual issues, we do this with regard to matters of legality, morality and individual responsibility, and in a way that allows young people to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use relationships education or RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation or lifestyle. Pine Green Academy is well aware that the primary role in young people's sex and relationships education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

The relationship and sex education programme is an opportunity for students to:

- Develop an understanding of sex, sexuality, and relationships, and the diversity within them
- Develop a range of appropriate personal skills including the ability to recognize risky situations and appropriate strategies to keep themselves safe

The aims will be achieved through the following objectives:

- Develop an understanding of a range of values and moral issues including the importance of family life
- Develop an understanding of the biological facts related to human growth and development, including reproduction
- Develop an understanding of the importance of safe and healthy relationships

1.4 Morals and values framework

We teach about relationships and RSE within the wider context of the school's aims and values framework. This means that although we give young people information about sexual behaviour, we do this with an awareness of the moral code and values which underpin all our work; our emphasis is placed on safe and healthy relationships. In particular, we teach relationships and RSE in the belief that:

- They are part of a wider social, personal, spiritual and moral education process
- Young people should be taught to have respect for their own bodies and know that they have the right not to be abused by other people, or be taken advantage of.
- Young people should learn about their responsibilities to others, and be aware of the consequences of sexual activity, including teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and sexual activity in respect of the law (including the sharing of sexual images and issues such as consent and Child Sexual Exploitation).
- Young people need to know the value of stable and loving relationships, and that it is important to build positive relationships with others that centre on trust and respect; the development of relationships, including sexual relationships, should be based on mutual consent, rather than any form of coercion, including that involving alcohol and/or other substances.
- Young people need to develop personal responsibility, self-respect and appropriate decision making skills.
- Young people are encouraged to show respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, gender, sexuality, feelings and views, and to know about the right of people to follow their own sexuality, within legal parameters.
- This policy is consistent with all other policies within Shaw Education Trust and is written in line with current legislation and guidance.

1.5 Legal Obligations

Pine Green Academy has a legal responsibility to provide a robust and suitable Relationships Education and RSE programme for all of our students as set out by the latest DfE guidance (2025). Parents do have a right to withdraw their children from specific Sex Education lessons within RSE during Secondary phase, and are encouraged to discuss this with staff prior to making any decisions to do so; a list of these specific lessons can be obtained upon request. However, there is no right to withdraw from any aspect of the wider Relationships Education curriculum at either Primary or Secondary; parents and carers also cannot withdraw their child from any aspect of health education, or from national curriculum science, which both cover aspects of RSE.

The religious background of all pupils will be taken into account when planning and teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content are appropriately handled. Pine Green Academy will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.

Teaching will also reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that pupils clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of any decisions that they may make, both now and in the future.

1.6 Review and monitoring

This policy will be reviewed biannually or in the following circumstances:

- changes in legislation and / or government guidance
- as a result of any other significant change or event
- in the event that the policy is determined not to be effective

This policy will be reviewed by the SLT in conjunction with the PSHE Coordinator on a biannual basis.

Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programme, will be implemented by the SLT and PSHE Coordinator.

Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in the delivery of the Relationships/RSE programme.

2. Organisation of the Programme

In our Secondary Provision, RSE is solely delivered by the PSHE Coordinator, who is responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the programme. A subject-specific teaching assistant supports within the classroom. This is overseen by the SLT.

In our Primary Provision, all PSHE, including the relationships and health education elements, are taught by the class teacher, with the only exception to this being that our School Nurse delivers more specialist sessions covering reproduction and puberty to prepare our young people for the physical and emotional changes that their bodies will go through during this time.

Pine Green Academy recognises that Relationships Education and RSE are compulsory requirement for schools. This will be delivered as part of the wider PSHE curriculum and in accordance with legislation and DfE recommendations (see Appendix 1). Planning and delivery will be monitored and reviewed on an annual basis or sooner as necessary.

In Secondary phase, the majority of the programme will be delivered through the RSHE timetabled lessons, with aspects taught via the science curriculum, Preparation for Adulthood lessons and Ethics lessons. In addition, our Key Stage 4 pupils receive bespoke Careers lessons. Students will be taught in their form groups, which may be mixed ability, mixed gender classes, with additional single sex groupings where necessary. For example, due to the low number of female pupils within our cohort, some content is delivered within Girls' Group to facilitate more in depth learning and discussion with other female pupils where our girls feel more comfortable.

Within RSE, we teach students about:

- The physical, hormonal and emotional development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- The way humans reproduce
- Contraception, safer sex, family planning, and fertility treatment
- Sexual activity in relation to the law (including consent and the sharing of sexual images)
- The right to say 'No'
- Sexual health and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS
- Respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity being part of a committed, long-term, and loving relationship
- The importance of family life, and the many forms that this can take including cultural differences
- Moral questions including those around abortion and domestic violence
- Relationship issues including sexual orientation and gender/transgender issues
- Respect for the views of other people, but also how the views of some subcultures may impact and influence their own opinions in a potentially harmful way
- Issues around body image and self-esteem
- What constitutes sexual abuse and harassment, including their rights and responsibilities both legally and morally
- Where to seek help, support and advice

External experts may be invited to assist from time to time with the delivery of the programme, but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

We use a variety of resources including:

- PSHE Association: Official body for PSHE education approved by the DfE.
- School Nursing Service: approved by the local authority, may deliver age appropriate training around various RSHE related themes including puberty.
- Votes for Schools: A nationally recognised PSHE and Citizenship focused resource which provides weekly resources focusing upon an issue in the news.
- Coram SCARF: A nationally recognised, quality assured curriculum package which provides curriculum resources for both Primary and Secondary phases.
- PSCO School Officers: provide sessions around staying safe in the community, issues such as knife crime, joint enterprise and exploitation, how to recognise grooming, how to report concerns etc.
- St John's Ambulance: provide 'Young Responders' specialist sessions for emergency first aid including CPR, how to deal with stab wounds and spiking incidents.

All external curriculum resources are reviewed and adapted to be in-line with the needs of our pupils; this includes removing some lessons from packages, adding extra sessions from other quality assured sources, or moving curriculum sessions to older year groups as required to meet the developmental stages of a particular group.

RSE forms part of the curriculum in every year group, and is taught during the Summer Term. Not all Relationships Education includes Sex Education. Please see Appendix 2 for an overview of the both the Primary PSHE and Secondary RSHE curriculums that include relationship education (primary) and RSE (secondary).

Delivery of the programme:

- Classes will be taught in gender-segregated groups if the cultural background of pupils requires that it is only appropriate to discuss a specific topic in single gender groups.
- Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning to meet the needs of all of our students. Resources reflect the diverse range of people in society.
- Inappropriate images, videos, etc. will never be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age, development and cultural background of pupils.
- All topics are delivered in a manner that is age, development and SEN-appropriate to meet the specific needs of the young people within our school.
- Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using IT equipment to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this, are outlined in the school's E-Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.
- The teacher will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter teaching of the programme accordingly.
- The teacher will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. The teacher will answer questions sensitively and factually. There will also be opportunities for pupils to raise issues anonymously.
- Teaching will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships, though sensitivity will always be given to not stigmatise pupils on the basis of their home circumstances.
- Pine Green Academy strongly advocates that pupils with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to learn about Relationships/RSE, and the programme is designed to be inclusive of all pupils.
- The teacher will understand that they may need to be more explicit and/or adapt their planning of work in order to appropriately deliver the programme to pupils with SEND. Bespoke, individual and appropriate scaffolding and support is provided to ensure that every pupil can access the curriculum.
- For Secondary phase, parents/carers will be informed when RSE programme will be taught during the academic year, and will be informed of their right to withdraw their child from specific sex education lessons within the programme of study.
- External experts (e.g.: school nurses) may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSE programme, but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

2.1 Training of staff

All staff members involved with the teaching of RSE will undergo regular training to ensure they are up-to-date with the RSE programme.

Training of staff will also be scheduled around any updated guidance on the programme and any new developments (for example 'sexting', 'manosphere'), which may need to be addressed in relation to the programme.

In addition, students may be signposted to more specialist trained staff if necessary who will be able to give them more specific advice (For example the school nurse on where and how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and treatment, as well as advice on issues such as contraception, including emergency contraception, and their effectiveness, and more sensitive issues such as self harm, eating disorders etc.).

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching

In the first instance, the PSHE Coordinator will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the subject. Learning walks, book/folder looks, and lesson observations will be carried out by a member of the SLT. PSHE Coordinator to keep Executive Head (SLT member responsible for PSHE) updated as necessary. Both the PSHE Coordinator and the Executive Head to report to the Governing Body as necessary. All monitoring in the subject will be in accordance with school policy.

Confidentiality

The teacher will conduct sex and relationships education lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. Confidentiality within the classroom is an important component of all PSHE, and the teacher will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their students as far as is possible within Relationships/RSE. Students should also respect the content and discussions brought about in these sessions and should treat these with confidentiality.

As a matter of good practice, ground rules are established within each class at the start of each topic within the PSHE programme to ensure that all parties present are aware of and adhere to such confidentiality boundaries.

However, it is recognised that, due to the nature of the curriculum, pupil disclosures are likely. If a student makes a reference to being involved in, or indicates that they are likely to be involved in, unlawful sexual activity, or anything that puts themselves or others at risk of harm, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a safeguarding matter in line with the school's Safeguarding and Pupil Protection policy and procedures. Students are made aware that personal disclosures that indicate that either they themselves or another young person are at any risk will be dealt with in this manner.

The teacher will not instruct students or recommend a specific course of action to be taken in relation to personal matters but will outline options and refer the student to the relevant organisations and/or school nurse if necessary. Any decision about informing parents will be made in consultation with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Executive Headteacher Mr D Hartley, who will take advice if necessary.

4. Parental Involvement

Pine Green Academy recognises the important role that parents/carers take in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up, and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings. We believe in the importance of working together to ensure that children grow up confident and cared for in today's world. As part of the curriculum, we will support and encourage pupils to actively talk to their appropriate adults (including families), about their thoughts, feelings, beliefs, worries and concerns, and any situations in which they feel unhappy, unsafe, or uncomfortable. Signposting to other appropriate sources / organisations will also be included. Parents are encouraged to support the school's RSHE and have access to this policy and curriculum information via the school website.

4.1 Parental Consultation

Parents/carers will have the opportunity to review and comment on this policy, and any updates/amendments.

Parents will have the opportunity to attend face to face sessions with the PSHE Coordinator and Primary PHSE Lead during the school year to discuss the policy and respective curriculums.

Parents/carers have the right to view materials used in the delivery of the PSHE curriculum upon request.

4.2 Right to withdraw

Pine Green Academy, and the DfE, understands that the teaching of some aspects of the programme may be of concern to parents/carers, and welcome open discussion of any of these concerns with either the PSHE Coordinator or a member of the SLT.

The school will ensure that no teachers express their personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme.

Parents/carers will be informed prior to the delivery of the RSE programme, and are advised that the content of the programme is available to view on the school website within this policy. Parents/carers are also advised of their right to withdraw their child(ren) from elements of the RSE programme. A copy of this communication can be found in Appendix 3.

It is a legal requirement that Pine Green Academy provide Relationships Education and RSE within school, however, it is also the right of the parent/carer to withdraw their child from the specific Sex Education lessons should they feel it appropriate to do so up to and until three terms before the child's 16th birthday, and the school respects this right. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will have to provide this. The exception to this is for those statutory parts included in the science national curriculum, and all of the relationship education lessons, which cannot be opted out of.

If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from specific lessons, they should in the first instance discuss with school, and, following discussion, put in writing which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in and send this to the school. The school will comply with the wishes of parents/carers in this regard (excepting the criteria laid out above) and will provide appropriate sources of information for parents who wish to withdraw their children so that the

educational needs can be met within the home. A list of the statutory topics included in the science national curriculum at the different key stages, can be found in Appendix 4 – Science National Curriculum.

5. Equal Opportunities

Pine Green Academy understands and abides by The Equality Act 2010, and fully respects the rights of pupils and staff members, regardless of any protected characteristics that he/she/they may have.

The school is dedicated to delivering the relationship and sex education programme with sensitivity and respect, avoiding any derogatory or prejudicial terms which may cause offence.

The school is committed to the provision of RSHE to all pupils. Our programme aims to respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds who make up our community and beyond. Equal time and provision will be allocated for all groups

6. Bullying Incidents

Pine Green Academy has a zero tolerance approach to bullying. Any bullying incidents caused as a result of Relationships Education or the RSE programme, for example those relating to sexual orientation or gender, will be dealt with as seriously as other bullying incidents within the school, and will be dealt with following the process in our Anti-bullying Policy. In the most severe cases, SLT may decide whether it is appropriate to notify the police or an anti-social behaviour coordinator in their LA of any action taken to address the incident.

Appendix 1

DfE Guidance for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE): Primary and Secondary (from September 2026)

• Relationships Education - Primary

Overview

The focus for primary relationships education should be on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

Building children's understanding and skills at primary is essential for preparing them for more complex content at secondary. For example, in primary, children will learn skills for managing difficult feelings in their friendships, like disappointment or anger. This prepares them to reflect on how to behave with kindness in more complex or challenging relationships at secondary.

Schools should be sensitive to pupils' circumstances, recognising that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children, and can include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. Teaching should illustrate a wide range of family structures in a positive way, and care should be taken to ensure that children are not stigmatised based on their home circumstances.

Primary relationships education should be anchored in an understanding of positive relationships, but should also equip children to keep themselves and others safe, and to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online. This can be delivered by focusing on boundaries, privacy, and children's rights over their own bodies and personal information. Pupils should be able to recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse. Even very young children can be equipped to understand what counts as abusive behaviour and to trust their instincts about behaviour that doesn't feel right. In addition, pupils should understand about bullying, and that this can include the use of derogatory terms relating to sex, race, disability or sexual orientation.

Pupils should know how to report concerns and seek advice. While teaching children how to stay safe, including online, teachers should be clear that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child.

Primary children should be introduced to protective and preventative content in a way that does not cause unreasonable alarm and does not appear to normalise risky behaviours or activities. For example, in late primary, schools may decide to discuss the pressure to share naked images if this is affecting pupils in the school. There may also be cases, such as when they know that pupils have seen pornography, in which schools may feel the need to discuss online sexual content. This should be communicated to parents/carers in advance.

Relationships education: content to be covered by the end of primary

Families and people who care for me

Curriculum content:

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care

- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

Curriculum content:

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.
- that not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.
- the characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.
- how to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.

Respectful, kind relationships

Curriculum content:

- how to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.
- the importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.
- how to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.
- pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.
- that they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.

- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.
- the different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.
- how to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Online relationships

Curriculum content:

- that people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.
- how to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.
- that there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.
- the importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online; understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.
- online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
- that the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.

Being safe

Curriculum content:

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.
- the concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.

- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.
- how to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.
- how to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

• Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) - Secondary

Overview

RSE in secondary should provide a clear progression from primary relationships education. RSE should provide young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. This should include the knowledge they need in later life to keep themselves and others safe, and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies.

Effective RSE focuses on respect for oneself and others and does not encourage or normalise early sexual experimentation. By supporting confidence and self-esteem, RSE will enable young people to make their own choices about whether or when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent, and to resist pressure to have sex.

Effective teaching will be participative and interactive and will give pupils opportunities to develop skills and to discuss and critically evaluate complex relationship scenarios.

RSE in secondary will cover a range of topics, including topics related to abusive behaviour. While teaching children how to stay safe, including online, teachers should be clear that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child or young person. Different forms of abuse should be addressed sensitively and clearly at appropriate ages. For pupils who are experiencing or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships, including at home, schools have an important role as a place of consistency and safety where pupils can find support.

When teaching sensitive topics, teachers can use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion, and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously.

Families

Curriculum content:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children.
- why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples; the legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony.
- that 'common-law marriage' is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children.
- that forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.
- how families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.
- how to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

Curriculum content:

- the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.
- how to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal.
- the importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others.
- what tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- the practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict.
- the different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
- the role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the

needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok.

- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice.
- how inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others.
- how pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others.
- pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called "involuntary celibates" (incels) or online influencers.

Online and media

Curriculum content:

- rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues.
- the characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. That social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.
- not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images.
- that keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves

has been shared. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime.

- what to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.
- about the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them.
- that the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong.
- that social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.
- how to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns.
- that pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
- that websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising).
- that criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion.
- that AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. It is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk.

Being safe

Curriculum content:

- how to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent.
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others.

- how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
- how to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. Pupils should learn ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. Pupils should understand that there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. Pupils might reflect on the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions.
- what constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it.
- that sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting.
- the concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.
- the concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language.
- the concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.
- that fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
- the concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.
- the concepts and laws relating to forced marriage.
- the physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible.
- that strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury. That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death.
- that pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful.
- how to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse, and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Curriculum content:

- that sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.
- the law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.
- sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- that some sexual behaviours can be harmful.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making.
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). The use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma.
- the prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.
- how and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.
- how to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The Law

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- 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 other weapons.
- extremism/radicalisation.
- grooming or exploiting children into criminal activity, which can include gang involvement and county lines drug running.
- hate crimes.
- the age of criminal responsibility.
- medical consent, Gillick competence and parental responsibility.

Appendix 2 – PSHE Curriculum Maps September 2026

Primary Phase

	Autumn 1 Me and my Relationships	Autumn 2 Valuing Difference	Spring 1 Keeping Safe	Spring 2 Rights and Respect	Summer 1 Being my Best	Summer 2 Growing and Changing
Y3	Cooperation Online rules & restrictions Online behaviours Friendship (respectful relationships) Coping with loss	Recognising & respecting diversity Being respectful & tolerant My community Bullying, inc. online	Managing risk Decision-making skills Drugs & their risks Staying safe online Digital literacy	Helping & being helped Looking after the environment Managing money Developing critical thinking	Keeping myself healthy & well Celebrating & developing my skills Developing empathy	Changing bodies & puberty Keeping safe Safe & unsafe secrets Relationships, inc. online
Y4	Healthy relationships Listening to feelings Bullying Assertive skills	Recognising & celebrating difference (inc. religions & cultural difference) Understanding & challenging stereotypes	Managing risk inc. online Understanding the norms of drug use (cigarette & alcohol use) Influences Online safety & behaviours	Making a difference (different ways of helping others or the environment) Media influence & digital literacy Decisions about spending money	Having choices & making decisions about my health Taking care of my environment My skills & interests	Body changes during puberty Managing difficult feelings Relationships inc. marriage
Y5	Feelings Friendship skills, inc. compromise Assertive skills Cooperation Recognising emotional needs	Recognising & celebrating difference, inc. religions & cultural Critical digital awareness Online Bullying & self esteem	Online safety Bullying inc. online Norms around use of legal drugs (tobacco, alcohol) Decision-making skills	My health rights, respect & duties Making a difference Decisions about lending, borrowing & spending Media manipulation Artificial Intelligence	Growing independence & taking ownership Keeping myself healthy Media awareness & safety My community	Managing difficult feelings Managing change How my feelings help keeping safe Getting help
Y6	Assertiveness Cooperation Safe/unsafe touches Positive relationships	Recognising & celebrating difference Recognising & reflecting on prejudice-based bullying Bystander behaviour Gender stereotyping	Understanding emotional needs Staying safe online Digital footprint Drugs: norms & risks (inc. the law)	Understanding media bias Digital critical thinking Caring: communities & the environment Earning & saving money Understanding democracy	Aspirations Managing risk Looking after wellbeing Digital literacy & critical thinking skills	Coping with changes Keeping safe inc. online AI/ deep fakes Body Image Sex education Self-esteem

Secondary Phase

KS3	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y7	Health and Safety Coping with change; personal safety in and outside school, including First Aid and CPR.	Health and Puberty Healthy routines, influences on health, puberty, menstruation, unwanted contact.	Gaming Why people game, risks and effects on mental health, gaming addiction.	Being Safe: PCSO's Respect Programme Risks of grooming - CSE, County Lines; making positive choices.	Diversity Diversity, prejudice and bullying; protected characteristics	Building Relationships Self-worth, romance, friendships (Incl. online) and healthy relationship boundaries.
Y8	Emotional Wellbeing Mental health and emotional wellbeing incl. importance of sleep, body image and digital resilience.	Drugs and Alcohol Alcohol and drug misuse, peer and social pressures relating to substance use including vaping.	Gambling and Gaming Why people gamble, risks of gambling, links between gaming and gambling.	PCSO's Respect Programme Knife crime, CSE, County Lines revisited, joint enterprise, control and coercion.	Discrimination Discrimination in all its forms, including racism, religious discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia, misogyny	Identity and Relationships Gender identity and sexual orientation, sex within the context of a loving relationship, intro to consent & contraception
Y9	Healthy Lifestyles Diet, exercise, lifestyle balance, making healthy choices, healthy and unhealthy coping strategies, further first aid and CPR.	Peer influences, substance use and gangs Healthy and unhealthy friendships, assertiveness, the role of substance use in this, gang exploitation.	Exploring Media Influence (Living in a Digital World) Media reliability, impact and influence of social media, AI literacy, online interactions, online crime.	PCSO's Respect Programme Knife crime, drug use, joint enterprise, control and coercion, sexual harassment; hate crimes.	Respectful Relationships Families and parenting, conflict resolution, control and coercion, relationship changes (FGM if needed).	Intimate Relationships Relationships and sex education – consent, contraception, STI's, attitudes to pornography.
KS4	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer2
Y10	Mental Health Mental health and ill-health, stigma, safeguarding health including during periods of transition or change.	Exploring Influence The influence and impact of drugs, gangs, role models and the media, impact of social media in this.	Gambling and Gaming Gambling hooks, advertising and marketing, 'big business', links between gambling and other risky behaviours, where to get help, links between gambling and alcohol etc.	PCSO's Respect Programme Short/long term consequences of crime, sexual harassment and stalking, domestic violence	Extremism and Radicalisation Communities, belonging and challenging a variety of extremist views, including misogyny and incel culture.	Healthy Relationships Recap of contraception and consent, relationships and sex expectations, myths, pleasure and the impact of media and pornography, sexual harassment.

Y11	Emotional Wellbeing/Coping with Stress Stress management, incl. exam stress, healthy coping strategies, where to access advice and support.	Health and Prevention Responsible health choices, access to healthcare, self-examination, safety in more independent contexts, street first aid.	Families Different families and parental responsibilities, marriage, forced marriage, changing relationships, pregnancy and fertility choices, menopause.	PCSO's Respect Programme Safe driving, hate crime, safe clubbing (risks of spiking etc.), how to help friends	Communication in Relationships Managing and resolving conflict, assertive communication, relationship challenges and abuse, sources of help/support.	Catch-Up Opportunity This time to be used to re-visit any missed learning from previous years. Bespoke to each class.
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Appendix 3 – Letter to parents/carers

Dear Parent / Carer,

Re: Relationships and Sex Education.

I am writing to inform you that during the Summer Term we will be providing Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for all students in your child's year group. This will form part of our wider PSHE programme of study and will be delivered to each class separately so that it meets the needs of the individual students within that class.

The aim of this module is to provide accurate information that will give our young people the knowledge to keep themselves safe, to enable them to recognise risky situations, and also to equip them with the skills to effectively deal with those situations should they ever need to. Our emphasis is placed on healthy relationships. All of our lessons will be delivered in line with current legislation, are developmentally and age-appropriate, take account of religious and cultural diversity, and will adhere to the relevant Safeguarding Guidelines. The content of our Relationships and Sex Education programme for your child's class is available on request.

It is a legal requirement that we provide RSE within school, however, it is also your right to withdraw your child from the specific Sex Education lessons should you feel it appropriate to do so, up to and until 3 terms before their 16th birthday. This does not include the wider Relationships Education curriculum, any aspect of Health Education, or the elements of the Science curriculum that cover puberty, conception and reproduction. In the first instance, please talk to us about this decision, prior to putting your request in writing (we will provide a form for you to do this, should you decide to do so).

Whilst we will always respect parental/carer wishes, we do strongly recommend that pupils are allowed to attend all lessons, as the likelihood is that they will hear about the content from their peers outside of the classroom without a teacher present to correct any misinformation that may be relayed to them.

If you wish to discuss this, or if you require any further information regarding any other aspect of the RSE provision, please feel free to contact either myself or our Head of School.

Yours sincerely,

Ms R Williams
PSHE Co-Ordinator

Appendix 4 – Science National Curriculum

In accordance with the DfE's 'Sex and Relationship Education Guidance' 2000 and 2025, there are certain aspects of sex and relationship education which are compulsory for pupils to learn within the science curriculum as they progress through the key stages.

Key stage	Pupils must be taught:
Key stage 1	That animals, including humans, move, feed, grow, use their senses and reproduce. To recognise and compare the main external parts of the bodies of humans. That humans and animals can produce offspring, and they grow into adults. To recognise similarities and differences between themselves and others. To treat others with sensitivity.
Key stage 2	That nutrition, growth and reproduction are common life processes for humans and other animals. About the main stages of the human life cycle.
Key stage 3	That fertilisation in humans is the fusion between the egg and sperm. About the physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence. How the foetus grows and develops.

	How the growth and reproduction of bacteria and viruses can affect health, including those which are blood borne and/or sexually transmitted.
Key stage 4	The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones. The medical uses of some hormones, including the control of fertility. The defence mechanisms of the body. How sex is determined in humans.