

St Bartholomew's Relationship, Sex and Health Education Draft Policy

Introduction

This is the draft policy of St Bartholomew's Primary on the approach taken to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). Pupils and parents, as well as other stakeholders have been and will continue to be consulted on its development.

Legal context

In 2026, all schools in England must follow the [updated Department for Education \(DfE\) statutory guidance](#) for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), which officially comes into force on **1 September 2026**

For primary pupils, the updated 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 pupils understand change and loss, including bereavement, and on developing communication skills, assertiveness, and the confidence to express personal needs and boundaries. There is an emphasis on physical and mental wellbeing and where and how to seek support.

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but:

- The curriculum for relationships education and health education does include content on puberty.
- The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts; the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty); and reproduction in some plants and animals.

Following this change in the law, the Department for Education published *Statutory Guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2019)*. This guidance requires primary schools in England to have a written relationships education policy to cover the following:

- How relationships education is delivered
- What sex education (if any) a school chooses to cover that goes beyond the national curriculum for science and relationships education.

This RSHE policy also supports legal requirements relating to the following:

- *The Equality Act 2010.*
- *The Education Act 1996.*
- *Statutory guidance, Keeping Pupils Safe in Education 2025.*

The following policies are also relevant to this Relationships and Health Education policy:

- Anti-bullying
- Safe-guarding
- Attendance
- Behaviour
- Drug Education
- Health and Safety

- Teaching and Learning
- Online Safety/IT
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Definition*

RSHE supports pupils and young people's personal development including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Its aims are to help pupils and young people to deal with the real-life issues they face as they grow up and that they will encounter as adults. Their learning will support them both online and offline, to make informed choices about their safety, physical and mental health, enabling them to live positive and fulfilled lives.

RSHE is enhanced by a supportive school ethos where everyone is valued, positive relationships are promoted and there is a safe learning environment.

The wider context of RSHE

The school's RSHE programme will:

- be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.
- be an entitlement for all pupils, including those with additional learning and language needs.
- be set within the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness.
- recognise that family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family.
- encourage pupils and teachers to share and respect each other's views with cultural awareness and sensitivity.
- ensure pupils are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure.
- recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up.
- work in partnership with parents/carers and pupils, consulting them about the content of programme.

RSHE contributes to:

- a positive ethos and environment for learning.
- safeguarding pupils (Children Act 2004), promoting their emotional wellbeing, and improving their ability to achieve in school.
- a better understanding of diversity and inclusion, a reduction in gender based and homophobic, biphobic, transphobic (HBT) prejudice, bullying, violence and harassment and an understanding of the difference between consenting and exploitative relationships.

- helping pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice.
- reducing sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic abuse and bullying.

Aims

The aims of our RSHE programme are:

Add the aims of your programme. For example, consider how your school will meet its legal obligation to:

- Provide accurate and age-appropriate information.
- Include all pupils.
- Help pupils make informed choices.
- Develop knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Build confidence and self-esteem.
- Develop personal attributes.
- Prepare pupils for the next stage of education and adulthood.
- Develop positive and inclusive attitudes to everyone, particularly to those with protected characteristics under the *Equality Act 2010*.

Roles and responsibilities

An effective programme of RSHE requires support from the whole school community and the following people have specific roles and responsibilities:

Governors

The Governing Body will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy which will be shared and approved by the Pupil Support Committee and shared at a full governing body meeting.

Headteacher

- Overseeing the development and delivery of RSHE.
- Providing staff with the opportunity to contribute to the development of RSHE.
- Providing information to the trustees/governors.
- Providing training for the subject leader and staff, as required.
- Supporting the subject leader to liaise with parents and carers.
- Dealing with parents and carers who wish to withdraw a child from sex education.

Subject leader

The subject leader is responsible for

- Leading the development and delivery of effective RSHE.
- Policy development
- Keeping up-to-date with the development of RSHE.

- Supporting colleagues as required.
- Monitoring and evaluating RSHE and providing necessary reports.
- Liaising with parents and carers.
- Keeping subject information up-to-date, including on the school website.
- Overseeing external visitors and resources used in RSHE.

All staff

All staff have a responsibility to

- To understand and implement the policy of RSHE.
- To teach RSHE in line with the agreed curriculum.
- To assess and monitor the progress of pupils.
- To respond to the needs of individual pupils.

Parents

The school will:

- keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum, including when it is going to be delivered.
 - gather parent /carers' views on the policy and take these into account when it is being reviewed.
- provide access to useful resources and information (web links and book lists) being used in class and do everything to ensure that parents/carers are comfortable with the education provided to their pupils in school through information letters.
 - share the key learning objectives for each RSE unit, the terminology being used and key questions that are anticipated to arise.
- expect parents/carers to share the responsibility of RSE and support their pupils's personal, social and emotional development.
- encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through RSE.
- provide support and encourage parents/carers to seek additional support

Curriculum organisation*

The school adopts the following approaches to organise the curriculum to ensure high quality delivery of RSHE:

Explain how your school RSHE curriculum is organised, to cover the following points:

- How RSHE is covered. The best practice approach is for RSHE to be covered as part of a wider programme of PSHE education.
- How regularly RSHE lessons are delivered. It is recommended that lessons are delivered weekly or fortnightly.

- Length of RSHE lessons. The guidance provides that lessons should be of sufficient length to allow pupils to explore topics and reflect on their learning, with the suggestion that:
 - for KS1 – lessons should be 40 - 45 minutes long;
 - for KS2 – lessons should be 50 - 60 minutes long.
- How focus days, visits and visitors will be used. Guidance provides that focus days, visits and visitors cannot replace a taught lesson but are a good way to enhance a programme.
- How cross-curricular learning will contribute. Links should be recognised in planning.
- Who will teach the lessons. Guidance provides that confident and skilled staff are most effective, particularly for sensitive and controversial topics and a school may want to use specialist staff for some topics.

Teaching and learning

RSHE is delivered in line with the teaching and learning policy. However, as the subject deals with real-life experiences, it is important to establish a safe and positive learning environment using the following approaches:

- Establishing clear ground rules in consultation with pupils. Ground rules should include confidentiality, respect for others, privacy and boundaries.
- Using distancing techniques including de-personalised discussions and role play.
- Using clear language to avoid misunderstandings.
- Avoiding prejudice and assumptions about pupils's abilities, desires, background and experiences.
- Dealing sensitively with unexpected questions and comments.
- Assessing and building on existing knowledge and experiences.
- Ensuring that learning is engaging, using a range of activities, including structured discussion and problem-solving.
- Providing a range of opportunities to learn, practise and demonstrate knowledge, skills and attitudes.
- Allowing time for reflection.
- Providing differentiated learning.
- Using a variety of groupings to enhance learning.

Curriculum content

Long term planning

The school has chosen to use the [Kapow Primary RSE scheme of work](#), which provides full curriculum coverage, including all the statutory content, for each year group.

Follow this link to view the [Kapow Primary RSE curriculum overview](#).

Resources

Resources are chosen based on the following principles:

They are **age-appropriate**, developmentally suitable and meet the needs of all pupils

- They are **factually accurate**, evidence-based and reflect current guidance from the Department for Education (DfE)
- They are **inclusive and representative**, reflecting the diversity of society, including different family structures, cultures, religions, and identities
- They promote **respect, equality and safeguarding**, in line with the school's values and statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010
- They are **sensitive to pupils' backgrounds** and are delivered in a way that is respectful of the school community

The RSHE lead and senior leaders review all resources prior to use to ensure they are appropriate and aligned with the school's curriculum intent. External resources and visiting speakers are also vetted to ensure they meet the same standards. Where appropriate, parents are informed about the resources used and may request to view materials to support transparency and partnership working. The school regularly reviews and updates resources to ensure they remain relevant, accurate and effective.

Visitors

Visitors can enhance pupils's learning. Teachers will select visitors in liaison with the subject leader. The following will be used to guide the use of visitors:

Outline how your school uses visitors. You should include the following:

- The school will use visitors to enhance the lessons delivered by the class teacher; and information on where a visitor fits into the long-term plan will be shared with the visitor.
- The school will make visitors aware of the school policy for RSHE.
- The school will check the content of sessions delivered by visitors to make sure that it fits with the school's ethos and meets legal requirements.
- A member of staff will be present in sessions delivered by visitors.
- The school will make sure visitors undergo the necessary checks as required by the school safeguarding policies.

Equality

Under the *Equality Act 2010*, the school is under a legal duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between those with protected characteristics and those without. The protected characteristics are:

- Age.
- Marriage and Civil partnership.
- Disability.
- Race.
- Religion and belief.
- Sexual orientation.
- Sex.
- Pregnancy and maternity.
- Gender reassignment.

Inclusion

All pupils, whatever their experience, background and identity, are entitled to quality RSHE that helps them build confidence and a positive sense of self, and to stay healthy. All classes include pupils with different abilities and aptitudes, experiences, religious/cultural backgrounds, gender and sexual identities. To encourage pupils to participate in lessons, teachers will ensure content, approach and use of inclusive language reflects the diversity of the school community and helps each and every pupil to feel valued and included in the classroom. The teacher and the pupils will also remind themselves of the Ground Rules for PSHE and discuss using the 'Ask it Basket' for question they may not wish to share in class. We promote the needs and interest of all pupils. The school's approaches to teaching and learning take into account the ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds of the pupils to ensure all can access the full RSE provision. We promote social learning and expect our pupils to show a high regard for the needs of others. RSHE is an important vehicle for addressing both multicultural and gender issues and ensuring equal opportunities for all.

Responding to pupils' diverse learning needs:

Considerations will be made for: • religious and cultural diversity • differing gender needs and abilities, including SEND • diverse sexuality of pupils • homophobic/transphobic/biphobic bullying and behaviour • pupil's age and physical and emotional maturity • pupils who are new to English • pupils who are under the care of the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Ethnicity, religion and cultural diversity:

Our RSHE curriculum is designed to reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that our young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make. Our policy values the different backgrounds of all pupils in school and, in acknowledging and exploring different views and beliefs, seeks to promote respect and understanding. We encourage respect for all religions and cultures. We do not ask pupils to represent the views of a particular religious or cultural group to their peers, unless they choose to do so.

Special educational needs, pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties:

RSHE helps all pupils understand their physical and emotional development and enable them to make positive decisions in their lives. We ensure that all pupils receive RSE and we offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of our pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary. Staff will differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully. The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information.

The RSHE programme will meet the needs of all pupils. Lessons will include content that will tackle discrimination and foster good relationships.

Right to withdraw from sex education*

In primary schools, Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory and all pupils are expected to participate fully in these lessons.

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from the **sex education** elements of RSHE that are not part of the National Curriculum for Science. In primary schools, sex education is not compulsory and is usually limited to additional content beyond statutory requirements, such as conception or birth.

The National Curriculum for Science, which includes teaching about:

- The main external body parts
- Changes in the human body as it grows (including puberty)
- Reproduction in some plants and animals

is **statutory**, and pupils cannot be withdrawn from these lessons.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from sex education lessons, they should make a request in writing to the Headteacher. The school will respect this request and will provide appropriate alternative provision for the pupil during these sessions.

The school encourages parents to discuss any concerns with staff so that they can understand the content and purpose of the RSHE curriculum and support their child's learning.

Safeguarding

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) plays a central role in the school's safeguarding responsibilities. It supports pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and confidence needed to stay safe and recognise risks both in the real world and online.

Through RSHE, pupils are taught to:

- Understand healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Recognise abuse, including physical, emotional and sexual abuse, as well as neglect and exploitation
- Understand the concept of consent and personal boundaries
- Identify inappropriate or unsafe behaviour, including online risks such as grooming, cyberbullying and exposure to harmful content
- Know how and where to seek help, and who trusted adults are

RSHE lessons are delivered in a safe, supportive environment where pupils feel able to ask questions. Ground rules are established to ensure respectful discussion while maintaining appropriate boundaries.

Staff are aware that RSHE topics may lead to disclosures of safeguarding concerns. All staff follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures in line with statutory guidance, including reporting any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff will not promise confidentiality to pupils and will always act in the best interests of the child. Any disclosures will be handled sensitively and in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

The RSHE curriculum is planned in coordination with the school's wider safeguarding approach to ensure that teaching is timely, relevant and responsive to emerging risks within the school and wider community.

Confidentiality in RSHE Lessons

The nature of RSHE means that pupils may disclose personal information that staff will respond to appropriately. Pupils will be reminded that lessons are not a place to discuss their personal experiences and issues, or to ask others to do so, through the establishment of a working agreement. Lessons will provide a safe space to ask appropriate questions and pupils and staff will use the ground rules which are followed in PHSE lessons. 'Ask It Basket' and access to our Inclusion Team will support pupils. Any information disclosed to a staff member or other responsible adult, which causes concern about the child's safety, will be communicated to a Designated Safeguarding Lead, in line with our safeguarding and child protection policy. Techniques used in school to minimise the chance of pupils making a disclosure in an RSHE lesson include: • de-personalising the discussion • ground rules • ask it basket • using role play to 'act out' scenarios • appropriate DVDs and TV extracts • case studies or dilemmas with invented characters • visits to from outside agencies.

Support

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to RSE. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom

Monitoring and evaluating*

The delivery of RSE is monitored by David Needham (RSHE Lead) along with Jane Wainwright (Headteacher) through:

- effective PSHE leadership with a system of lesson observations and peer support
- a system for regular review of the RSHE policy and programme
- pupil and staff interviews/questionnaires •
- pupil/staff/parent surveys •
- scrutinising staff planning • samples of pupils' work

Communication of policy

This RSHE policy will be available to read on and downloaded from the school website and copies can be requested free of charge from the school office.

Review*