



Relationships & Sex Education Policy (RSE)

Responsible Person	Mrs L Stinchon
Policy Updated	September 2026
Next Review	September 2027

Intent

At Trawden Forest Primary School, relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) helps pupils develop the knowledge, skills and values they need to build respectful relationships, protect their health and wellbeing and keep themselves and others safe. Teaching is inclusive, evidence-informed, age-appropriate and carefully sequenced.

The aims of RSHE at our school are to:

- provide a safe framework in which sensitive questions and discussions can be handled appropriately
- help pupils form caring, respectful relationships and manage conflict with kindness
- develop self-respect, confidence, empathy, resilience and the ability to seek help
- teach accurate vocabulary for emotions, relationships and body parts
- prepare pupils for puberty and support positive physical and mental health
- enable pupils to recognise unsafe situations, abuse and harmful behaviour, including online
- teach pupils how to keep safe around roads, railways and water, including the Water Safety Code
- respond to relevant local needs and prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of life in modern Britain

1. Statutory requirements

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. Health education is compulsory in state-maintained primary schools.

This policy has regard to the Department for Education's revised statutory guidance, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, which came into effect on 1 September 2026. The guidance is issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Sex education beyond the statutory science curriculum is not compulsory in primary schools. The DfE recommends that primary schools teach sex education in Year 5 and/or Year 6, linked to conception and birth in the science curriculum. The school's provision is explained in section 5.3.

The National Curriculum for Physical Education also requires maintained primary schools to provide swimming instruction in Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2, including safe self-rescue. Classroom water safety teaching within health education complements practical swimming and water safety lessons. It does not replace them.

2. Policy development, consultation and publication

The original policy was developed with staff, pupils, parents and carers. This 2026 revision reflects the revised DfE statutory guidance. When this policy is developed or materially reviewed, the school will proactively engage and consult parents and carers, seek the views of pupils and staff and consider relevant local information. The governing board approves the final policy.

The policy is published on the school website and a copy is provided free of charge on request. If emerging safeguarding, health or local issues require a material change to planned RSHE content, parents and carers will be informed in advance wherever it is appropriate and safe to do so.

3. Guiding principles

- Pupil engagement: teaching is informed by meaningful engagement with pupils and their needs.
- Parent and carer transparency: families are told what is taught and can view the materials used.
- Positivity: teaching develops healthy norms, respect and practical skills without normalising harmful behaviour.
- Careful sequencing: knowledge is built from the start of school and revisited before pupils are likely to need it.
- Relevance and accessibility: content is age-appropriate, responsive to local needs and adapted for pupils with SEND.
- Evidence and safeguarding: materials are accurate, evidence-informed and consistent with safeguarding practice.
- Whole-school approach: RSHE is supported by the school's behaviour, equality, online safety, safeguarding and health and safety work.

4. Curriculum organisation and progression

RSHE is taught mainly through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum. Relevant knowledge and skills are also taught through science, computing, physical education, swimming, assemblies and wider school life. Biological content is taught through the science curriculum. The statutory end points are listed in Appendix 1.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

Teaching establishes the foundations of kindness, friendship, family, feelings, respect, privacy and personal safety. Pupils learn to identify trusted adults, ask for help, behave safely online and recognise everyday hazards, including risks near roads and water.

Lower Key Stage 2

Teaching develops skills for managing friendship difficulties, loneliness, boundaries, bullying, stereotypes and online risks. Pupils build a wider vocabulary for feelings, health and body changes. They learn the Water Safety Code and how to respond safely in an emergency.

Upper Key Stage 2

Teaching consolidates respectful relationships, assertiveness, pressure, privacy, harmful contact, online information and help-seeking before transition to secondary school. It includes puberty, menstruation, correct anatomical vocabulary and age-appropriate sex education as described below. Practical swimming teaches safe self-rescue alongside the classroom water safety curriculum.

A year-by-year curriculum overview identifies the units, resources and intended outcomes for each class. Teachers may adapt examples, pace or grouping to meet the needs of a cohort while ensuring all statutory content is covered by the end of primary school.

5. Curriculum content

5.1 Relationships education

The primary relationships education curriculum covers:

- families and people who care for me

- caring friendships
- respectful, kind relationships
- online safety and awareness
- being safe

Teaching is rooted in positive relationships but also equips pupils to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online. Pupils learn about boundaries, privacy and rights over their own bodies and personal information. They learn that abuse is never the fault of the child.

5.2 Health and wellbeing education

The primary health and wellbeing curriculum covers:

- general wellbeing
- wellbeing online
- physical health and fitness
- healthy eating
- drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- health protection and prevention
- personal safety, including risk around roads, railways and water
- basic first aid
- developing bodies, including puberty, correct anatomical vocabulary and menstruation

5.3 Sex education in primary

In addition to statutory relationships, health and science content, the school teaches age-appropriate primary sex education in Year 5 and/or Year 6. This draws on the human life cycle taught in science to explain, factually and sensitively, how a baby is conceived and born. Parents and carers are consulted about this content, are informed before it is taught and can view the materials.

Puberty, menstruation, the correct names of body parts and science content on life cycles and reproduction are statutory health or science education. They are not treated as withdrawable sex education. The limited right to request withdrawal is explained in section 9.

5.4 Water safety

From 1 September 2026, statutory primary health education includes recognising risk and keeping safe around water, including the Water Safety Code. Classroom teaching will be age-appropriate, cumulative and revisited at suitable points, including before relevant educational visits, swimming lessons and school holidays.

Pupils will learn the four parts of the Water Safety Code:

- Stop and think: look for dangers, read signs and consider cold water, depth, currents and changing conditions before going near or into water.
- Stay together: go near water with family or friends, use lifeguarded places where possible and follow adult supervision and local safety advice.
- Call 999: in an emergency, call 999. Ask for the Coastguard at the coast or Fire and Rescue Service inland. Do not enter the water to attempt a rescue. Reach or throw something that floats if it is safe to do so.
- Float: if you fall in or become tired, stay calm, float on your back and call for help. Encourage a person in difficulty to float and throw them something that floats.

Classroom teaching is coordinated with the school's practical swimming programme. Through swimming and physical education, pupils are taught to swim competently, use a range of strokes

and perform safe self-rescue in different water-based situations. The PSHE/RSHE lead and PE lead will check that classroom and practical provision together provide coherent progression.

Educational visits near water continue to be planned and risk assessed in line with the school's Educational Visits Policy and health and safety procedures. Classroom knowledge does not remove the need for appropriate supervision, competent staff or site-specific controls.

6. Teaching and learning

RSHE is normally taught by school staff who know the pupils and the school's safeguarding procedures. Teaching may take place in whole classes, smaller groups or, where this supports learning, single-sex groups. Mixed-sex learning remains important so that pupils understand each other's experiences and develop shared respect.

Teachers establish clear ground rules, use distancing techniques and make an anonymous question box available where helpful. Lessons avoid inviting personal disclosures. Teachers use accurate, respectful language and choose examples that include the range of families and experiences represented in modern Britain.

7. Difficult questions and sensitive content

Pupils' questions will be treated seriously and without shame. Teachers will answer in a factual, age-appropriate and supportive way where it is suitable to do so. A question that is not suitable for whole-class discussion may be answered individually, referred to a senior member of staff or used to signpost the pupil to a parent, carer or trusted adult.

The school does not use a fixed list of questions that staff will refuse to answer. An unanswered question can lead a child to unsafe or inaccurate sources online. However, teachers will not provide detail that is inappropriate for the pupil's age or stage. If a question suggests that a pupil has experienced, witnessed or may be at risk of harm, staff will follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy immediately.

8. Working with parents and access to materials

The school will engage parents and carers proactively about the RSHE curriculum and the importance of RSHE for pupils' wellbeing and safety. Parents and carers will be shown a representative sample of planned resources and may request to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE.

Copyright may affect how materials are shared, but it will not be used as a reason to refuse access. Where necessary, viewing may take place through a parent portal, presentation or appointment and families may be asked not to copy or redistribute copyrighted resources. Parents and carers are consulted, but do not have a veto over statutory curriculum content.

9. Parents' right to request withdrawal

Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw a pupil from relationships education, health education or content taught as part of the national curriculum for science, including science content related to puberty or reproduction.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the school's non-statutory primary sex education. In a primary school, the headteacher must grant the request for the non-statutory sex education identified in section 5.3.

Requests should be made in writing to the headteacher using the form in Appendix 3. The headteacher will discuss the request with the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the pupil. This discussion will clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, the content from which withdrawal is sought and any possible social or emotional effects of withdrawal. The school will keep a record and provide appropriate, purposeful education during the lesson.

10. Inclusion, equality and SEND

RSHE is for every pupil. Teaching complies with the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, and must not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment. Pupils learn the importance of equality, dignity and respect.

Teaching illustrates a wide range of nurturing family structures positively, including single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents or carers. No pupil is stigmatised because of their family circumstances.

Content is made accessible for pupils with SEND and prepares them for adulthood. Adaptations may include pre-teaching vocabulary, visual supports, simplified language, repetition, smaller-group teaching, additional processing time and support from an adult who knows the pupil well. Adaptation will increase access without removing essential safeguarding knowledge.

Where facts and the law relating to biological sex, sexual orientation or gender reassignment arise, they will be taught accurately, respectfully and at an age-appropriate level. Staff will not reinforce gender stereotypes or present contested views as established fact. Bullying or disrespectful language is never acceptable.

11. Safeguarding and confidentiality

RSHE is taught in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff cannot promise unconditional confidentiality. Ground rules make clear that a concern about a pupil's safety must be passed to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

If staff have any concern about a pupil's welfare, they act immediately. Personal information is handled with care and shared only with those who need it to protect the child or fulfil a legal duty. Visitors are briefed on safeguarding, reporting and confidentiality before a session begins.

12. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

- approves this policy and holds the headteacher to account for its implementation
- checks that the curriculum and resources align with statutory guidance
- ensures clear information is available to parents and carers, including access to materials and the right to request withdrawal from sex education

The headteacher

- ensures RSHE is taught consistently and that staff receive suitable training
- manages requests for withdrawal from non-statutory primary sex education
- ensures emerging issues are addressed safely and parents and carers are informed where required

The PSHE/RSHE subject lead

- maintains the policy, curriculum overview and suitable resources
- supports staff knowledge and confidence
- coordinates with the science, computing and PE leads, including on water safety
- monitors teaching, learning and pupil outcomes
- keeps staff informed about statutory updates and relevant local needs

The PE lead and Educational Visits Coordinator

ensure practical swimming and safe self-rescue provision meets the National Curriculum for Physical Education

support coherent links between classroom water safety, swimming and educational visits

ensure visits near water follow the school's risk assessment and educational visits procedures

Staff

- deliver RSHE sensitively, accurately and in line with this policy
- adapt teaching while retaining essential knowledge
- monitor progress and respond appropriately to questions and safeguarding concerns
- raise training or resource needs with the subject lead or headteacher

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage with learning and treat others with respect and sensitivity. Pupils are encouraged to ask for help, report concerns and contribute to curriculum review in an age-appropriate way.

13. External visitors and resources

External visitors may enhance teaching but do not replace the teacher. The school remains responsible for the content. The school checks the visitor's suitability and credentials, reviews lesson plans and materials in advance and ensures materials can be made available to parents and carers. A member of school staff is present and the visitor follows this policy and the school's safeguarding procedures.

14. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation

Teachers assess learning against intended outcomes through discussion, retrieval, pupil work and other age-appropriate methods. Assessment checks what pupils know and can do. It does not assess personal values, family circumstances or private experiences.

The PSHE/RSHE lead monitors planning, curriculum coverage, pupils' work and pupil voice. Water safety monitoring includes evidence that the Water Safety Code is taught in class and that practical swimming and self-rescue outcomes are monitored through PE. Findings inform staff training, curriculum development and reports to leaders and governors.

15. Staff training

RSHE is included in induction and continuing professional development. Training supports accurate subject knowledge, safe handling of questions and disclosures, SEND adaptation, online safety, puberty and water safety. Staff who are not confident about a topic should seek support before teaching it.

16. Review

The PSHE/RSHE subject lead, headteacher and governing board will review this policy annually and sooner if statutory guidance, legislation or the needs of pupils change. Parents and carers will be consulted when the policy is developed or materially reviewed.

Related policies and guidance

- [Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education, statutory guidance effective 1 September 2026](#)
- [Department for Education: National Curriculum in England, physical education programmes of study](#)
- [Royal Life Saving Society UK: The Water Safety Code](#)
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Behaviour and Relationships Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

Appendix 1: Statutory primary curriculum content

The following end points summarise the revised DfE statutory guidance effective from 1 September 2026. They must be covered by the end of primary school. Content is sequenced and revisited in an age-appropriate way.

Relationships education

Families and people who care for me

- Families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.
- The characteristics of safe and happy family life include commitment, protection, care, spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- Other children's families may look different from their own. Those differences should be respected and pupils should know that other families can also be characterised by love and care.
- Stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- Marriage and civil partnerships are formal and legally recognised commitments between two people which are intended to be lifelong.
- Pupils should recognise when family relationships make them feel unhappy or unsafe and know how to seek help or advice.

Caring friendships

- Friendships are important for happiness and security. Pupils learn how people choose and make friends.
- Healthy friendships are positive and welcoming and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils develop skills for caring, kind friendships.
- Not every child will have the friends they would like at all times. Most people feel lonely sometimes and there is no shame in talking about it.
- Friendships that support happiness and security involve mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, shared interests and support with difficulties.
- Most friendships have ups and downs and can often be repaired or strengthened.
- Pupils learn to manage conflict and know that resorting to violence is never right.
- Pupils recognise when a friendship makes them unhappy or uncomfortable and know how to get support.

Respectful, kind relationships

- Pupils pay attention to the needs and preferences of others and consider how needs and wishes are balanced in relationships.
- Pupils understand the importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries with friends, family, peers and adults.
- Pupils communicate effectively, manage conflict with kindness and respect, express needs and boundaries assertively and manage disappointment and frustration.
- Pupils discuss the difference between being assertive and controlling and between being kind to others and neglecting their own needs.
- Pupils can expect respect from others and understand the importance of respecting people who are different or make different choices or hold different beliefs.
- Pupils develop practical skills that improve and support relationships.
- Pupils understand courtesy and manners.

- Pupils understand self-respect, how it links to happiness and how interests and skills can support self-esteem and identity.
- Pupils understand different types of bullying, including online bullying, its impact, the responsibility of bystanders and how to get help.
- Pupils understand stereotypes, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive and how to challenge them.
- Pupils know how to seek help when concerned about violence or harm or when unsure who to trust.

Online safety and awareness

- People should be respectful online and the same principles apply online as face to face, including avoiding pressure to share information or images and resisting peer pressure.
- Pupils critically evaluate online relationships and information. They know people may pretend to be someone else, including a child, and understand how to recognise and report harmful content or contact.
- There is a minimum age for joining social media sites, currently 13, which helps protect children from inappropriate content and unsafe contact.
- Pupils exercise caution when sharing information online and use privacy and location settings to protect it.
- Material shared online may be circulated. Once circulated, it may be impossible to delete everywhere or control where it ends up.
- The internet contains content that can be inappropriate or upsetting for children. Pupils know where to seek advice and support.

Being safe

- Pupils understand appropriate boundaries in friendships with peers and others, including online.
- Pupils understand privacy and that it is not always right to keep secrets that relate to safety.
- Each person's body belongs to them. Pupils know the difference between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact.
- Pupils know how to respond safely and appropriately to adults in all contexts, including people they know and do not know.
- Pupils recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous and develop skills for deciding who to trust.
- Pupils know how to report abuse, online concerns or feelings of being unsafe and have the vocabulary and confidence to do so.
- Pupils know how to ask for help for themselves or others, keep trying until they are heard and identify sources of advice.

Health and wellbeing education

General wellbeing

- The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, helping others, rest, family and friends, hobbies, interests and community participation.
- The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
- The range and scale of emotions that people experience. Worrying and feeling down are normal at times and are not in themselves signs of a mental health condition.
- How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
- How to judge whether feelings and behaviour are appropriate and proportionate.
- Isolation and loneliness can affect children and seeking support can help.

- Bullying, including online bullying, can have a negative and lasting impact on mental wellbeing. Pupils know how to seek help for themselves or others.
- Change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke different feelings. Grief is natural and everyone grieves differently.
- Where and how to seek support, including who to speak to in school about their own or someone else's wellbeing or ability to manage emotions.
- Mental health problems are common and early support can help.

Wellbeing online

- The internet is an integral part of life for almost everyone and has positive and negative aspects.
- Online relationships can complement in-person relationships but are unlikely to be a substitute for high-quality relationships in person.
- The benefits of limiting time online and the effects of excessive device use and positive or negative online content on physical and mental wellbeing.
- How online behaviour affects others and how to behave respectfully online.
- Why social media, some apps, computer games, online gaming and gambling sites are age restricted.
- Risks from online gaming, monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms and that gaming can become addictive.
- How to think critically about online content and make responsible decisions about what is appropriate.
- Abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and pupils know how to seek support from trusted adults.
- How online information is selected and targeted, including information from search engines.
- Rights relating to personal data, privacy and consent.
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with online issues.

Physical health and fitness

- The mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
- How to build regular moderate and vigorous physical activity into daily and weekly routines.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
- How and when to seek support and which adults to speak to in school about health concerns.

Healthy eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet, including calories and other nutritional content.
- The importance of a healthy relationship with food.
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The characteristics and risks of a poor diet, including obesity and tooth decay, and the impact of alcohol on diet or health.

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and their risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol and drug-taking. This includes nicotine addiction and risks from products such as nicotine pouches.

Health protection and prevention

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as unexplained weight loss or changes to the body.
- Safe and unsafe exposure to the sun and how to reduce sun damage, including skin cancer risk.

- The importance of enough good-quality sleep, the recommended amount for their age, practical steps for improving sleep and the impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and learning.
- Dental health, including brushing twice daily with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth and regular dental check-ups.
- Personal hygiene, bacteria and viruses, how germs spread and are treated and the importance of handwashing.
- The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation, aligned where possible with when vaccinations are offered.

Personal safety

- Hazards, including fire risks, that may cause harm or injury and ways to reduce risk.
- How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, level crossings and water, including the Water Safety Code.

Basic first aid

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
- Basic first aid concepts for common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

Developing bodies

- Growth and the ways bodies change and develop, especially during adolescence. This includes the human life cycle and puberty as a stage in that process.
- The correct names of body parts, including penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and nipples. Pupils understand that these are private and learn to understand and express boundaries around them.
- The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes. Teaching takes place before periods may begin, recognising that they can start from age eight.

Appendix 2: The Water Safety Code

The Water Safety Code provides memorable actions for pupils to use around swimming pools, rivers, canals, reservoirs, lakes, quarries, beaches and other open water. Examples and resources should be matched to pupils' age, SEND and local context.

Code	Essential teaching
Stop and think	Look for dangers. Read and follow signs, flags and local advice. Consider depth, currents, cold water, weather, banks and hidden hazards.
Stay together	Go with family or friends. Use lifeguarded locations where possible. Children stay within the supervision set by a capable adult.
Call 999	Ask for the Coastguard at the coast or Fire and Rescue Service inland. Do not enter the water to rescue. Reach or throw something that floats when it is safe.
Float	If you fall in or become tired, stay calm, float on your back and call for help. Encourage a person in trouble to float and throw them something buoyant.

Key message for pupils: call for trained help rather than entering the water. A person attempting a rescue can quickly become a second casualty.

Suggested curriculum links

- PSHE and health education: risk, hazards, decision-making, emergency calls and the Water Safety Code.
- PE and swimming: floating, safe entry and exit, signalling for help and safe self-rescue.
- Science: the effects of cold water, breathing and body temperature at an age-appropriate level.
- Geography: local rivers, canals, reservoirs, coasts and changing conditions.
- Educational visits: retrieval of the Water Safety Code before visits near water, alongside the visit risk assessment.

Appendix 3: Parent or carer request for withdrawal from primary sex education

This form applies only to non-statutory primary sex education. It does not apply to relationships education, health education or the national curriculum for science.

To be completed by the parent or carer			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent or carer		Date	
Reason for requesting withdrawal from non-statutory primary sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent or carer signature			
To be completed by the school			
Date of discussion		Staff member	
Agreed actions and notes			
Headteacher signature		Date	