



Horizons Specialist Academy Trust

Secondary

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Approved by the Board of Trustees: 24 March 2026

Date of next review: Spring 2027

Reviewer: Principal, Green Gates Academy

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Policy Statement of intent

At Horizons Specialist Academy Trust (“the Trust”), we understand the importance of educating pupils about sex, relationships and their health, for them to make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives.

The teaching of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and health education can help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society.

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, evidence and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school’s RSE and health education curriculum will be organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

Our Trust aims to assure parents and pupils that all aspects of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) will be delivered in a safe space, allowing time and compassion for questions at a level that every pupil understands. Sensitive topics relating to RSE will be delivered in a sensitive manner as part of a whole-school approach where parents and teachers work in partnership.

Equality Impact Assessment

This policy has been reviewed to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010, promoting equality of opportunity, eliminating discrimination and fostering good relations across all protected characteristics. No adverse impact has been identified.

Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE (2015) ‘National curriculum in England: science programmes of study’
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017 (section 34)
- DfE (2021) “Teaching About Relationships, sex and health”
- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- DfE (2025) ‘Keeping children safe in education’.

- DfE (2025) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education'

The Statutory document from the DfE states:

"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...They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continue to be compulsory in independent schools."

DfE Guidance p.8

"Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also 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."

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behavioural Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement
- Child-on -Child Abuse
- Visitor Policy
- Public Sector Equality
- Sexual Harassment
- Acceptable Use Agreement for pupils

Relationship, Sex and Health Education Programme and Operational Guidance

1. The aims of relationships, sex and health education at our Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Trustees and Executive Leaders are responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the RSHE curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Providing clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Ensuring RSHE is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- Creating and keeping up to date a separate written statement of this policy and ensure the statement is published on the school's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.
- Ensuring that all teaching staff receive ongoing training on issues relating to PSHE and RSHE and how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- Ensuring that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to RSHE.
- Ensuring that the RSHE curriculum covers the teaching of safeguarding, including in relation to online safety.

The principal is responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring all staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.

- Ensuring there is adequate time on the school timetable to deliver RSHE as a statutory curriculum subject.
- Ensuring parents/carers are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing all requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory elements of the RSHE and health education curriculum.
- Discussing withdrawal requests with parents, and the child if appropriate, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, including the benefits of receiving the education.
- Ensuring withdrawn pupils receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- Encouraging parents to be involved in consultations regarding the school's RSHE/RSE policy
- Contributing to the review of this policy on an annual basis.

The RSHE subject leader is responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of RSHE
- Ensuring the subjects are age-appropriate, sequential and within a high-quality programme, supporting individual needs as identified on the EHCP.
- Working closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the RSHE and health education curriculum compliments, and does not duplicate, the content covered in national curriculum subjects.
- Reviewing changes to the RSHE curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RSHE providing support to staff where necessary.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression between each year group.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSHE.
- Leading staff meetings and ensuring all members of staff involved in the curriculum have received the appropriate training.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring the correct standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the principal.
- Engaging in training in relation to safeguarding, including in online safety

- Ensuring that relationships and sex education are separated in definition.
- Ensuring that statutory RSE is defined. Critically, schools need to be able to identify sex education to implement the parental right to request their child is excused from sex education. Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSHE curriculum.
- Promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff.
- Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a pupil that have arisen through the teaching of RSHE.
- Organising a safe space for pupils to go should they need additional support or time to talk after an RSHE session.
- Ensuring staff teach in a trauma-informed manner and are particularly mindful of more vulnerable pupils who may have Adverse Childhood Experiences or potential triggers related to the material.

Subject teachers are responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with, and promoting, this policy
- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way and that is of a high-quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of appropriate teaching methods and resources are used to cover the content.
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationship, Sex and Health Education
- Liaising with the RSHE subject leader about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring pupil progress in RSHE
- Engaging in training
- Liaise with the SENCO to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of Relationship, Sex and Health Education to the RSHE and health education subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make because of the subject content to the DSL.

- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents have requested to withdraw them from the non-statutory components of RSHE, by providing them with alternative education opportunities.
- Providing an inclusive approach to their lesson delivery.

The SENCO is responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs.
- Advising staff on the use of TAs to meet pupils' individual needs

3. Organisation of the Relationship, Sex and Health Education Curriculum

All schools providing secondary education are required to deliver statutory RSHE and all state-funded schools are required to deliver health education.

For the purpose of this policy, “relationships and sex education” is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

For the purpose of this policy, “health education” is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

The RSHE and health education curriculum will be developed in consultation with teachers, pupils, and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations.

We will gather the views of teachers, pupils, and parents in the following ways:

- Questionnaires
- Meetings
- Letters
- Training sessions

The majority of the RSHE and health education curriculum will be delivered through PSHE education, with statutory elements taught via the science curriculum.

The RSHE subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

The curriculum has been developed in line with the DfE's Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education.

The school will consider the context and views of the wider local community when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of issues in the local area.

The school will consider the religious background of all pupils when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

The RSHE curriculum is informed by topical issues in the school and wider community, to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs, for example, if there was a local prevalence of specific sexually transmitted infections, our curriculum would be tailored to address this issue.

Content and delivery are in line with the needs of the pupils.

- Effective, high-quality teaching breaks down core knowledge and skills into manageable and well sequenced units, including opportunities for pupils to practise skills so that they will be confident to use them in real life situations,
- It builds knowledge and skills sequentially, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress.

4. RSE subject overview

RSE will continue to develop pupils' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.

Families Curriculum content:

1. That there are different types of committed stable relationships.
2. How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children.
3. 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.
4. That 'common-law marriage' does not legally exist in England and Wales, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children.
5. That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.
6. How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships.
7. 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.

8. 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 Curriculum content:

1. 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.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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.

11. 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.
12. 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 safety and awareness Curriculum content:

1. Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice.
10. 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.
11. 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.
12. How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
13. 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).
14. 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.
15. 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:

1. 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.

2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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.
7. The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.
8. 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.
9. The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.
10. That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
11. The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation.
12. The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage.
13. 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.

14. 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.
15. 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.
16. 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:

1. That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, 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

9. The prevalence of STIs, the short- and long-term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
10. How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.
11. How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.
12. 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.

5. RSE programmes of study

The school is free to determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people and includes the statutory content.

6. Health education subject overview

The physical health and mental wellbeing curriculum will continue to develop pupils' knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level, in addition to the content outlined in this section.

“**RSHE**” is used to refer to the overall programme of relationships, sex, and health education.

“**RSE**” refers to relationships and sex education and is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.

“**Health education**” is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

7. Health education programmes of study

The school is free to determine an age-appropriate, developmental curriculum which meets the needs of young people and includes the statutory content.

General wellbeing Curriculum content:

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.
2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.

3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.
7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.
8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.
9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

Wellbeing online Curriculum content:

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.
2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.
3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.

6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.
7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.
8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.
9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.
10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.
11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness Curriculum content:

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.
3. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Healthy eating Curriculum content:

1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
3. The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
4. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping Curriculum content:

1. The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

Health protection and prevention Curriculum content:

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.
4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

Personal safety Curriculum content:

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.
2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

Basic first aid Curriculum content:

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

Developing bodies Curriculum content:

1. About growth and other ways, the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.

3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.

8. Delivery of the curriculum

The majority of Relationship, Sex and Health Education will be delivered through the PSHE curriculum/SHAPE.

Through effective organisation and delivery of the subject, we will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that can be used confidently in real-life situations.
- The curriculum will be delivered in a manner that is sensitive to the diverse backgrounds, needs and protected characteristics of all pupils.
- RSE and health education complement several national curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.
- The RSE and health education curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.
- The curriculum will proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupil's physical, emotional, and sexual development.
- RSHE will be delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual, and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.
- Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.
- The school will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSHE curriculum – this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson, and will be included in lessons on dating. LGBTQ+ content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate, and factual way that allows pupils to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships.
- All teaching and resources are assessed by the RSHE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and additional needs.
- Classes may be taught in gender-segregated groups dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, and the cultural background of pupils where it is only appropriate to discuss the body in single gender groups.
- Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion, and practical activities will be used to assist learning.

- Inappropriate images, videos, etc. will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils.
- Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the Trust's Online Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.
- Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole class settings and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly.
- Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.
- The curriculum will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls and activities will be planned to ensure both are actively involved, matching their different learning styles.
- Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of marriage and healthy relationships when teaching RSHE, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise pupils based on their home circumstances.
- Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.
- At all points of delivery of the curriculum, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.

9. Curriculum organisation

The RSHE programme is delivered through a variety of opportunities including:

- Designated PSHE time as part of a broad and balanced curriculum
- Circle time
- Use of external agencies and services
- School ethos
- Small group work
- Cross-curricular links
- Assemblies
- Enrichment days or weeks
- Residential trips

10. Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts; the school will dispel myths and will also understand other names of body parts that can sometimes be used to replace the correct terminology. Lessons around keeping safe and how certain parts of the body should be private must be addressed to ensure pupils are not left vulnerable.

11. Teaching about the law

There will be a range of opinions regarding some topics within RSHE.

The starting principle should be that applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

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

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

12. Dealing with difficult questions

- It is important that all school staff feel comfortable to take RSHE classes and answer questions from pupils. If the teacher does not feel confident leading

discussions, then that is likely to be reflected by the pupils, and their learning will be compromised.

- The school provides regular professional development training in how to deliver sex education; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSHE is so important. Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the RSHE subject leader.

13. Curriculum links

- The school seeks opportunities to draw links between RSHE and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning.
- RSHE will be linked to the following subjects:
 - Citizenship – pupils are provided with the knowledge, skills and understanding to help prepare them to play a full and active part in society, including an understanding of how laws are made and upheld and how to make sensible decisions.
 - Science – pupils are taught about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows, including puberty.
 - ICT and computing – pupils are taught about how they can keep themselves safe online and the different risks that they may face online as they get older.
 - PE – pupils can develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead healthy, active lives.
 - PSHE – pupils learn about respect and difference, values, and characteristics of individuals.

14. Working with parents/carers

- The school understands parents and carers' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships and health is vital.
- The school will work closely with parents and carers when planning and delivering the content of the RSHE and health education curriculum.
- When in consultation with parents and carers, the school will provide:
 - The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
 - Examples of the resources the school intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
 - Information about parents/carers' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSHE.
- Parents will be provided with frequent opportunities to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSHE.
- The school understands that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents.

- If parents/carers have concerns regarding RSHE, they may submit these via email to email address or contact the school office to arrange a meeting with the principal on telephone number.
- Parents/carers will be regularly consulted on the curriculum content, through meetings and letters, and the curriculum will be planned in conjunction with parents' views. A recent consultation of this policy was shared with parents/carers in March 2026. Feedback was discussed and considered for further development in Trust practice and policy development.

When in consultation with parents, the school will provide:

- The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
- Examples of the resources the school intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSHE.

The school will remain aware that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. If parents have concerns regarding RSHE, they will contact the principal/RSHE co-ordinator.

15. Working with external agencies

Working with external agencies will be used to enhance the school's delivery of RSHE and bring in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSHE curriculum but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

When working with external agencies, the school will ensure:

- A teacher is present throughout these lessons.
- Visitors are given a copy of this policy and expected to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.
- All resources used by guest speakers are available to parents to view prior to lesson delivery.
- The lesson the external expert has planned fits with the school's planned curriculum and this policy.
- The expert's credentials are checked before they can participate in delivery of the curriculum, in line with the Visitor Policy.
- The expert's lesson plan is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- That the materials the expert intends to use, as well the lesson plan, meet all pupils' needs, including those with SEND.
- That procedures for confidentiality are in place; this includes ensuring that the expert understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

- The school will use visitors to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, not to replace teaching by those staff.

16. Withdrawal from lessons

- Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.
- Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes.
- Requests to withdraw a child from sex education will be made in writing to the principal.
- Before granting a withdrawal request, the principal will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the child, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.
- The principal will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have.
- All discussions with parents will be documented. These records will be kept securely in the school office with consideration to GDPR polices.
- Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, the school will decide to provide the child with RSE.
- Pupils who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.
- For requests concerning the withdrawal of a pupil with SEND, the principal may take the pupils' specific needs into account when making their decision.

17. Equality and accessibility

The Trust will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

- The curriculum will be delivered in a manner that is sensitive to the diverse backgrounds, needs and protected characteristics of all pupils.
- The Trust will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range, and needs of its pupils and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with the above protected characteristics.
- Pupils will understand different gender identity (broadly identifying as meaning the gender related identity, appearance or mannerisms or other gender-related characteristics of a person (whether by way of medical intervention or not). With or without regard to the person's designated sex at birth)
- Supporting inclusion influenced by personal identity and equalities so that everyone's personal identity is respected, including their gender identity and sexual orientation.
- The 2025 RSHE Guidance states "schools should be mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate, and they should be careful not to endorse any view or teach it as fact. (For example, they should not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity. Schools should avoid language and activities that enforce gender stereotypes. Schools should be mindful to avoid any suggestion that social transition is a simple solution to feelings of distress or discomfort)

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender

Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect throughout their education. They should learn about all protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment, by the end of their secondary education. 68. We strongly encourage primary schools to teach about healthy loving relationships, and to include same-sex parents along with other family arrangements when discussing families. At secondary school, there should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships, and secondary schools should ensure that this content is integrated into RSHE programmes of study rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. Schools should ensure that they cover all the facts about sexual health, including STIs, in a way that is relevant for all pupils, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or gender questioning.

Pupils should also be taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment. This should recognise that people have legal rights by virtue of their biological sex which are different from the rights of those of the opposite sex with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Pupils should also be taught to recognise that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, as with the other protected characteristics, have protection from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity.

In teaching this, schools should be mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate, and they should be careful not to endorse any view or teach it as fact. For example, they should not

teach as fact that all people have a gender identity. Schools should avoid language and activities which repeat or enforce gender stereotypes. Schools should be mindful to avoid any suggestion that social transition is a simple solution to feelings of distress or discomfort.

Schools should encourage young people to consider how to express their views while remaining respectful of the opinions of others. Schools should be clear that bullying or disrespectful language or behaviour is never appropriate.

How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, religion, sexual orientation or disability can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)

That gender is different from Sex and other associated terms.

Gender is expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity and is most frequently assumed from the sex assigned at birth. Unlike sex (noun), gender is a cultural construct and is lived (e.g. on language, media, popular culture) and regulated (e.g. by socio-cultural norms, such as stereotypes of 'masculinity' and 'femininity,' and in law). In sex and gender education it is important to highlight whilst sex is a biological difference, gender is an expression of this sex, often assumed from birth, however, this may not be how a person feels inside.

The school is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their needs– teachers will understand that they may need to be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to pupils with additional needs.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of pupils at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, and developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia, and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and tackled promptly.

The school will make clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy.

18. Safeguarding and confidentiality

To meet the DfE's best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation of safeguarding-related areas of the curriculum, as their knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive, e.g. self-harm, consent or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging or providing instructions to pupils. Teaching of these subjects will always prioritise preventing harm to pupils as a central goal.

All pupils will be taught about keeping themselves safe and others safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Confidentiality within the classroom is an important component of RSHE, and teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible, in compliance with the school's Pupil Confidentiality Policy.

Teachers will, however, understand that some aspects of RSHE may lead to a pupil raising a safeguarding concern, e.g. disclosing that they are being abused, and that if a disclosure is made, the DSL will be alerted immediately.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled – this includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

In teaching about safeguarding, the RSHE curriculum will be tailored to the specific needs and vulnerabilities of individual pupils, including pupils who are victims of abuse and pupils with SEND.

In relation to safeguarding, the RSHE curriculum will cover the following aspects:

- Healthy and respectful relationships
- Boundaries and consent
- Stereotyping, prejudice, and equality
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- How to recognise an abusive relationship, including coercive and controlling behaviour
- The concepts of, and laws relating to:
 - Sexual consent
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Abuse
 - Grooming
 - Coercion
 - Harassment
 - Rape
 - Domestic abuse

- So called 'honour'-based violence, e.g. forced marriage and FGM, and how to access support.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- The RSHE curriculum will be kept under constant review, and the school will consider scenarios in which safeguarding concerns and patterns of concerning behaviours, e.g. reports of sexual harassment, should be addressed by updating relevant parts of the RSHE curriculum.

19. Staff training

Training will be provided by the RSHE subject leader to the relevant members of staff on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date with the RSHE curriculum.

Training will also be scheduled around any updated guidance on the curriculum and any new developments, such as "sexting," revenge porn, up-skirting and strimming which may need to be addressed in relation to the curriculum.

Where available schools will support teachers to receive training on the Social Exclusion Report on Teenage Pregnancy, and the role of an effective RSE curriculum in reducing the number of teenage conceptions.

Appropriately trained staff will be able to give pupils information on where and how to obtain confidential advice, counselling and treatment, as well as guidance on emergency contraception and the consultation effectiveness.

20. Monitoring quality

The RSHE subject leader is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subject.

The RSHE subject leader will conduct subject assessments on a termly basis, which will include a mixture of the following:

- Self-evaluations
- Lesson observations
- Topic feedback forms
- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Lesson planning scrutiny

The RSHE subject leader will create annual subject reports for the principal and governing board to report on the quality of the subjects.

The RSHE subject leader will work regularly and consistently with the principal and RSE link governor, e.g. through yearly review meetings, to evaluate the effectiveness of the subjects and implement any changes.

21. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by the principal in conjunction with the RSHE subject leader on an annual basis.

Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programmes, will be implemented by the principal.

Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff and, where necessary, parents and pupils, involved in the RSHE curriculum.

Letter to Parents Regarding Relationship, Sex and Health Education

School name
Address line one.
Address line two.
Address line three.
Postcode
Date

RE: Relationship, Sex and Health Education at name of school

Dear parent,

Government guidelines outline that, from the age of 11, it is compulsory for all schools to provide Relationship, Sex and Health Education

At our school, we believe that it is important to provide our pupils with a thorough and balanced curriculum, including age-appropriate information about sex and relationships.

The details of what will be taught to the various year groups are detailed in the school's Relationship, Sex and Health Education policy, which can be accessed on our school website insert website address, or in hard copy via our school office.

Though schools must provide RSE and health education for pupils from the age of 11, up until the age of 19, only aspects of the science national curriculum are compulsory for pupils to learn. Therefore, as parents, you are entitled to request that your child be removed from sex education lessons up to and until three terms before they turn 16-years-old. After that point, if your child wishes to receive sex education, the school will make arrangements to provide them with sex education during one of those terms.

Requests for withdrawal should be submitted in writing to myself, the principal, who will discuss this with you and your child's teacher, and determine an appropriate substitute for these lessons. In most instances, children will be provided with self-directed reading or exercises which they can complete under the supervision of a trainee teacher.

If you have any concerns or queries about your child's participation in these lessons, please do not hesitate to contact either myself or your child's class teacher to discuss these.

Yours sincerely

Name

Principal