Christ Church Upper Armley C of E Primary School

Policies & Procedures

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Approved on	1st September 2026
Approved by	Local Governing Board
Next review due	31st September 2027

We learn with head, heart and hand

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1. Vision, introduction and aims

At Christ Church Upper Armley CE Primary School, RSHE contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social, mental and physical development. It helps children build respectful relationships, understand their bodies and wellbeing, recognise unsafe situations and know how to ask for help. Teaching is rooted in our Christian ethos and in respect for the faiths, beliefs, cultures and family structures represented within our community.

RSHE is lifelong learning about relationships, health, safety, physical and emotional development. In primary school it establishes knowledge, language, attitudes and practical skills that help pupils make informed, ethical and safe choices now and in later life.

Aims

- help pupils form and maintain safe, caring, respectful and fulfilling relationships;
- develop kindness, self-respect, resilience, honesty, integrity, courage and trustworthiness;
- give pupils accurate, age-appropriate knowledge about health, safety, bodies, puberty and, where taught, human reproduction;
- help pupils recognise boundaries, abuse, exploitation, bullying and harmful online behaviour, and report concerns;
- prepare pupils for physical and emotional change, including menstruation and puberty before these changes may occur;
- develop communication, assertiveness, conflict-resolution and decision-making skills;
- challenge prejudice and stereotypes while teaching law and contested issues accurately and impartially;
- make learning accessible to all, including pupils with SEND, EAL and differing communication or sensory needs; and
- work openly and respectfully with parents and carers.

2. Statutory framework and definitions

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 make relationships education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and health education compulsory in academies. The revised Department for Education statutory guidance came into effect on 1 September 2026. The school must have regard to that guidance and must have an up-to-date written policy.

Definitions

Relationships education: Statutory teaching about families and people who care for us, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships and being safe.

Health education: Statutory teaching about physical health, mental wellbeing, online wellbeing, health protection, personal safety, first aid and developing bodies.

Sex education in primary: Teaching beyond relationships education, health education and the national curriculum for science. It is not compulsory in primary schools. Where the school teaches it, content, timing and resources will be made clear to parents.

Science: Statutory national curriculum content, including the main external body parts, growth from birth to old age, puberty, and reproduction in some plants and animals. Parents cannot withdraw pupils from statutory science.

Legislation and guidance considered

- Education Act 2002, including section 80A;
- Education Act 1996, including section 403;
- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019;
- Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- Department for Education statutory RSHE guidance, effective 1 September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- National curriculum programmes of study for science, computing and physical education; and
- the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour, Online Safety, Equality, SEND and Complaints policies.

3. Guiding principles

Pupil engagement: Teaching is informed by meaningful pupil voice and assessment of pupils' starting points.
Parent engagement and transparency: Parents are consulted when the policy is developed or reviewed and can view all curriculum materials on request.
Positivity: Teaching builds healthy norms, positive attitudes and practical skills without normalising harmful behaviour or stigmatising groups.
Careful sequencing: Knowledge and skills are taught before pupils are likely to need them, building progressively from Reception to Year 6.
Relevant and responsive: Content is age- and stage-appropriate, reflects the school's context and responds to emerging safeguarding or wellbeing needs.
Skilled, participative delivery: Staff create a safe environment for discussion, use interactive teaching and understand how to respond to disclosures.
Whole-school approach: RSHE is reinforced through safeguarding, behaviour, collective worship, science, computing, PE, RE, assemblies and pastoral provision.

4. Curriculum content and delivery

RSHE is taught through the planned PSHE curriculum and is reinforced through science, computing, PE, RE, assemblies, themed weeks, stories, circle time and pastoral work. Teachers will identify clearly whether content is relationships education, health education, science or primary sex education. The class teacher is normally responsible for delivery; any use of an external provider remains under the school's oversight.

Teaching methods

Teachers may use discussion, stories, case studies, role play, quizzes, matching and sorting, drama, drawing, debates, videos and anonymous questions. Pupils are never expected to disclose personal information. Distancing techniques and fictional scenarios are used for sensitive content. Learning is adapted through visuals, simplified language, pre-teaching, repetition, smaller groups, sensory or communication support and alternative ways of recording understanding.

School curriculum themes

- families of many kinds and people who care for us;
- friendship, respect, kindness, loneliness and conflict resolution;
- feelings, emotional regulation, change, loss and bereavement;
- boundaries, privacy, consent in everyday relationships and asking for help;
- online relationships, privacy, location settings, pressure to share information or images, harmful content, scams, gaming and monetisation;
- keeping healthy through physical activity, sleep, food, hygiene, dental health, vaccination and time outdoors;
- drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping, nicotine and medicines;
- personal safety around fire, roads, railways, level crossings and water, including the Water Safety Code;

- basic first aid and making an effective emergency call, including reporting rather than filming an incident;
- growth, correct anatomical names, puberty and menstruation; and
- where provided in Years 5 and/or 6, age-appropriate sex education linked to conception and birth.

Correct anatomical language

To support safeguarding and accurate communication, pupils are taught correct names for body parts, including penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and nipples. Pupils learn that private parts are private, that their body belongs to them, how to express boundaries and how to seek help. This teaching does not, by itself, constitute sex education.

Puberty and menstruation

Pupils learn about growth and puberty as part of statutory health education. Menstruation is taught before pupils may experience it, recognising that periods can start at age eight. Teaching includes physical and emotional changes, practical management, respectful vocabulary such as "period products", and how to seek support. All pupils receive appropriate knowledge; teaching may sometimes use smaller groups where this improves safety, accessibility or confidence, without creating stigma.

5. Faith, equality and inclusion

Faith and cultural perspectives

As a Church of England primary school, we may explain the school's distinctive Christian perspective on relationships while making clear when content reflects religious belief. Teaching will also recognise that families hold a range of faith and non-faith views. Discussion will be balanced, respectful and non-judgmental, and the applicable law will be taught factually.

Equality and family diversity

The school complies with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Teaching must not discriminate or amount to harassment. Pupils learn respect for people who are different from them and encounter a positive, age-appropriate range of family structures, including single-parent families, same-sex parents, grandparents and kinship carers, adoptive families, foster families and families affected by separation. Homophobic, biphobic, transphobic, sexist, racist, disablist and other prejudicial language or behaviour will be challenged. Primary teaching about families may include same-sex parents as one of the family arrangements represented in society and in the school community. Where biological sex and gender reassignment are discussed, staff teach facts and law accurately, avoid reinforcing stereotypes and do not present contested views as established fact. Pupils are taught to express views respectfully and to treat others with dignity.

SEND and vulnerability

Teaching is planned so that pupils with SEND can access, understand, rehearse and apply essential knowledge and skills. Staff recognise that some pupils with SEND, social communication needs, learning disabilities or SEMH needs may be more vulnerable to bullying, harmful sexual behaviour, abuse, exploitation or violence. Adaptation will preserve the safeguarding purpose and ambition of the curriculum rather than removing essential content.

6. Safeguarding and safe teaching

- A safe, supportive learning environment and clear group agreement will be established.
- Pupils will understand that staff cannot promise complete confidentiality.
- Teachers will use distancing techniques and will not invite personal disclosures in whole-class discussion.
- Staff will answer questions factually, sensitively and in an age-appropriate way. Questions unsuitable for the whole class may be answered individually, deferred until staff have checked accurate information, or referred to parents where appropriate.
- An anonymous question box may be used. Questions will be screened before being answered.
- If a pupil makes a disclosure or a member of staff has a concern, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed immediately and the DSL or deputy informed.
- If content is adjusted in response to an emerging need, parents will be informed of a significant departure from the published policy and relevant materials will be available on request.
- The victim of abuse is never to blame. Teaching about safety will avoid frightening pupils or implying responsibility for preventing abuse.

Where an external visitor delivers a session, the school will agree in advance how safeguarding concerns will be reported and managed. Staff remain present and responsible for the lesson.

7. Working with parents and carers

The school aims to maintain open, respectful communication with parents and carers. Parents are key partners in helping children connect school learning with family faith, beliefs and values.

- consult parents when developing or reviewing this policy;
- publish the policy on the school website and provide a free copy on request;
- give clear information about what will be taught, when it will be taught and whether it is relationships education, health education, science or sex education;
- provide advance information about primary sex education;
- show parents a representative sample of planned resources and make all RSHE curriculum materials available to view on request;

- explain the use and credentials of any external provider;
- offer opportunities to ask questions, raise concerns and discuss how to continue conversations at home; and
- comply with copyright law when sharing materials, using a parent portal, presentation or supervised viewing where appropriate. Copyright will not be used as a reason to refuse parental access to materials.

Parents do not have a veto over statutory curriculum content. Concerns should be raised with the Headteacher. Complaints will be considered under the school's Complaints Policy.

8. Right to withdraw from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all primary sex education provided by the school. They do not have the right to withdraw a child from relationships education, health education, or statutory science, including science content related to puberty or reproduction.

- A request should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the form in Appendix 2 or by letter.
- Before withdrawal, the Headteacher will offer to discuss the nature and purpose of the curriculum, the benefits of participation, any concerns, and the possible social and emotional effects of withdrawal. The discussion will be documented.
- In a primary school, the Headteacher must grant a request to withdraw from sex education other than content taught as part of science.
- The school will provide appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- The school will make clear in advance which lessons are classified as sex education.

9. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body / trust

- ensures an up-to-date policy is in place, published and available free of charge;
- ensures curriculum content, resources, accessibility and parent information align with statutory guidance;
- monitors that pupils, including those with SEND, make progress towards expected outcomes; and
- supports and maintains the school's religious character while meeting equality duties.

The Headteacher

- ensures the policy is implemented consistently;
- oversees parent consultation, withdrawal requests and complaints;
- ensures teaching is safe, inclusive and appropriately resourced; and
- ensures safeguarding concerns are managed under school procedures.

The PSHE/RSHE lead

- leads curriculum review, sequencing and evaluation;
- checks that resources and visitors are accurate, unbiased, age- and stage-appropriate and accessible;
- supports staff knowledge, confidence and subject-specific pedagogy;
- coordinates communication with parents; and
- keeps leaders informed about statutory updates and emerging needs.

Teachers and other staff

- teach in line with this and related policies;
- make appropriate adaptations without reducing essential safeguarding content;
- assess pupil learning and contribute to evaluation;
- handle questions and disclosures safely; and
- report concerns immediately in line with safeguarding procedures.

10. Resources, visitors and staff training

The PSHE/RSHE lead reviews resources annually and when guidance or pupil needs change. Resources will be accurate, age- and stage-appropriate, unbiased, accessible, inclusive and consistent with the published curriculum. The school will not use materials that cannot be made available to parents on request.

External organisations may enhance teaching, but the school remains responsible for content and delivery. The school will check credentials, lesson plans and materials in advance, consider whether an organisation has a commercial or partisan interest, make materials viewable by parents and ensure safeguarding arrangements are explicit.

Staff training is coordinated by the PSHE/RSHE lead and informed by curriculum monitoring, safeguarding trends, statutory changes and staff confidence. Training includes safe facilitation, SEND adaptation, parent transparency, handling questions, and responding to disclosures.

11. Assessment, monitoring and review

Teachers assess pupils' knowledge, attitudes and skills through baseline activities, discussion, retrieval, scenarios, pupil reflection and application tasks. Assessment identifies misconceptions and where additional teaching or support is needed. Pupils are not assessed on personal beliefs or experiences.

The PSHE/RSHE lead evaluates provision through curriculum review, pupil voice, parent and staff feedback, work scrutiny, lesson visits where appropriate, safeguarding information and assessment evidence. The policy will be reviewed annually and sooner if statutory guidance, legislation, local need or school practice changes.

Next scheduled review: September 2027

Appendix 1: Primary statutory curriculum coverage

The following summary supports curriculum auditing. Detailed progression and year-group allocation are set out in the school's RSHE/PSHE curriculum documents.

Area	By the end of primary, pupils should know
Relationships: families	Importance and characteristics of safe, happy families; stable caring relationships; marriage and civil partnership as legal commitments; respect for different families; recognising unsafe family relationships and seeking help.
Relationships: friendships	Making and choosing friends; kindness, inclusion and loneliness; qualities of healthy friendships; repairing difficulties; managing conflict without violence; getting support.
Respectful relationships	Needs and preferences; boundaries; communication; assertiveness rather than control; managing disappointment and frustration; respect, courtesy, self-respect, stereotypes, bullying and help-seeking.
Online safety and awareness	Respect online; resisting pressure; unknown contacts and harmful content; minimum ages; privacy and location settings; permanence and circulation of online material; reporting and support.
Being safe	Everyday boundaries; privacy and secrets; body ownership; appropriate and unsafe contact; responding to adults; recognising harmful relationships; reporting abuse and persisting until heard.
General wellbeing	Physical activity, outdoors, helping others, rest, relationships and interests; emotions and proportional responses; loneliness; bullying; change, grief and bereavement; seeking support; early help for mental health.
Wellbeing online	Benefits and risks of online life; balancing online and in-person relationships; screen time; respectful behaviour; age restrictions; gaming monetisation, gambling, scams, fraud and addictive design; data, privacy, consent and reporting.
Physical health and fitness	Active lifestyles, regular physical activity, risks of inactivity and where to seek help.
Healthy eating	Balanced diet, healthy relationship with food, preparing meals, poor diet, obesity, tooth decay and effects of alcohol.
Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping	Facts and risks relating to legal and illegal substances, smoking, vaping, alcohol, drugs, nicotine addiction and nicotine products.
Health protection and prevention	Recognising illness; sun safety; sleep and screens; dental hygiene; germs and handwashing; vaccination and immunisation.
Personal safety	Hazards and fire risk; safety around roads, railways and level crossings; water safety and the Water Safety Code.

Area	By the end of primary, pupils should know
Basic first aid	Calling emergency services clearly; reporting rather than filming; basic responses to common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.
Developing bodies	Growth and human lifecycle; puberty; correct anatomical names; privacy and boundaries; menstrual cycle and changes, taught before periods may start.

Appendix 2: Parent request for withdrawal from primary sex education

This form applies only to sex education delivered outside statutory relationships education, health education and national curriculum science.

Pupil name	
Class / year group	
Parent/carer name	
Contact details	
Lesson(s) or content from which withdrawal is requested	
Reason for request (optional)	
Date of discussion with Headteacher	
Agreed arrangements and purposeful alternative education	

Parent/carer signature: _____ Date: _____

Headteacher signature: _____ Date: _____

Reference documents

- Department for Education (2026), Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance, effective 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education (2026), Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Department for Education and Department of Health (2015), SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.