

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy



Relationship and Sex Education Policy
From September 2026
Ratified by governors on 9th July 2026

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Give students the knowledge and confidence to be able to make informed decisions about their own safety and well-being.
- Provide an inclusive curriculum which makes all students feel seen and acknowledged.

2. Statutory requirements

The duties on schools in this area are set out in legislation. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education by the Department for Education made under sections 34 and 35 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#), make relationships education compulsory for all students receiving primary education and relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education.

Maintained schools and academies are required to provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced in accordance with Section 78 of the [Education Act 2002](#).

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#)

3. Policy development

This policy, like all school policies, is to be implemented in accordance with the principles and practice stated in our Equality Scheme.

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents.

The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. **Review** – the head of RSE compiled all relevant information, including relevant national and local guidance
2. **Staff consultation** – Key staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. **Student consultation** – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE through a student voice activity
4. **Parent/stakeholder consultation** – a group of parents were invited to review the policy
5. **Ratification** – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

To ensure an effective RSE provision, this policy will be reviewed every 12 months. The next review will be Sept 27 and will be reviewed by the deputy head.

4. Definitions

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and Personal identity.

Relationship education allows students to understand their role and the role of others in the positive relationships they may be a part of. This can include family relationships, friendships, intimate relationships and the role of formal relationships. Our curriculum will empower students to be able to make their own choices about whether or when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent, and to resist pressure to have sex.

Sex education is defined as the understanding of reproduction, sexual health, and the range of contraception methods. Sex education is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

5.1 Curriculum content

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students.

RSE is embedded within the Personal Development curriculum which is delivered through timetabled lessons throughout the year across all year groups. There are cross curricular links with a wide range of subjects in the school and often planning will take into consideration the content in other subjects to allow for expansion on particular topics and to complement students' learning.

The curriculum includes age appropriate teaching of online relationships, online safety, image sharing, pornography, consent in digital spaces, artificial intelligence generated content, misinformation and the influence of the online communities and social media. Students are taught how to recognise, report and seek support regarding harmful online behaviours.

The RSE curriculum contributes to students' emotional wellbeing, supporting the development of self-esteem, emotional wellbeing, emotional literacy and healthy decision making. There are opportunities within the curriculum for emotional wellbeing to be taught both explicitly and discretely, helping students to apply skills to a multitude of contexts.

Students will be taught about consent and healthy boundaries in an age appropriate manner. This includes recognising pressure, coercion, abusive and manipulative behaviours. Students will understand both the legal and ethical importance of consent in relationships.

Where external agencies are used to support the schools RSE/PSHE curriculum, teachers will remain present and responsible for the learning. All external materials will be quality assured and reviewed to ensure they align with the curriculum, statutory guidance and the school's values.

5.2 Curriculum planning and implementation

The curriculum is thoroughly planned by trained members of staff and in accordance with credited RSE and PSHE organisations ensuring content is inclusive, age appropriate and relevant to the

specific needs of our students. When planning lessons students with specific educational needs are taken into consideration and lessons are designed to be accessed by all students.

Teaching will reflect the requirements of the 2010 Equality Act and will include age appropriate education about the 9 protected characteristics. Children will be taught to respect differences and understand that all people deserve dignity, respect and protection from all kinds of discrimination.

The curriculum supports students to recognise and challenge harmful gender stereotypes, misogyny, sexism, sexual harassment and discrimination. Students develop an understanding of respectful behaviour and the importance of equality, dignity and safety in all relationships.

Students help guide the curriculum by taking part in curriculum audits, allowing the head of department an insight to what matters to our students and where gaps in their understanding may lie. RSE is assessed regularly through class quizzes, end of topic assessments, lesson by lesson retrieval and through class discussion.

5.3 Request to view curriculum

Parents are able to request to view the curriculum in more detail if they wish to review the materials themselves. To request to view the curriculum, parents should contact the leaders of the Personal Development department to arrange a meeting, where they can view a more detailed curriculum plan, lesson plans and lesson resources and materials.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the Personal Development curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE), information and communication technology (ICT), physical education (PE).

We provide a safe and respectful environment and ground rules are set in place which enables all students to access and thrive in their learning environment. Students are encouraged to respect each other and respect the opinions of others, and lessons are promoted as safe spaces for all our students.

Students are encouraged to ask questions to encourage discussion; however if questions are asked which go beyond the sex education covered by the school, the pupil will be informed that the question may not be appropriate for the learning environment. Depending on the situation the students may be directed to discuss the matter at home with a parent/carer or trusted adult, or signposted to a support service. In some circumstances, the issue may be raised as a safeguarding concern and the designated safeguarding lead may be alerted.

In the event where a pupil does not feel confident to ask a question in front of the class. They have the option to drop a question anonymously in a secure box and the question can be answered in the following lesson.

7. Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE can often lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue, often due to students' increased awareness of what is and is not appropriate behaviour in a relationship. If a disclosure does occur, then the designated safeguarding lead will be notified immediately and actions will be taken in accordance with the schools safeguarding policy and procedures. Staff are unable to offer unconditional confidentiality to students when students are making a disclosure. Where a member of staff believes that a student may be at risk of harm, safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with the school's safeguarding policy.

All outside visitors are required to fill in a visitor registration form and if a visitor does not hold a DBS they will be supervised while with students at all times. If a pupil was to make a disclosure to an outside visitor or an outside visitor was to observe a safeguarding issue, they would follow their own safeguarding guidelines and inform the safeguarding lead.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

8.3 Staff

Personal Development teaching staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE

Personal Development is taught by staff who use resources produced by the leader of Personal Development, regular meetings take place to ensure consistency and quality of delivery. If teachers have concerns about teaching RSE they are encouraged to discuss this with the leader of Personal Development in the first instance.

The leaders of Personal Development have responsibility to ensure lessons cover the statutory requirements, that lessons are of high quality, are sequenced appropriately, progress is monitored, lessons are delivered sensitively and consistently. The leaders of Personal Development will ensure that any changes to the curriculum are reflected in the RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

8.4 Students.

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education outside of the National Curriculum for Science within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education or health education. Before granting withdrawal of a child from sex education, parents are encouraged to discuss the request with the headteacher to understand the request and clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. If withdrawal is granted alternative provision for those lessons will be arranged.

10. Training

Personal Development is delivered by subject specialists and staff are trained on the delivery of RSE during regular meetings with the Curriculum Leader. and outside professionals.

The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the leaders of Personal Development through: learning walks, book scrutiny, student voice, staff feedback and the METAL (monitoring, evaluation of teaching and learning) process. The contribution of external agencies is monitored and evaluated by the Curriculum Leaders and the Deputy Headteacher who has responsibility for Personal Development. Students voice is a tool we use on a yearly basis to assist with adapting and/or amending learning activities and curriculum.

This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher with responsibility for Personal Development annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

Committee Responsible for Review:	Student & Curriculum
Ratified by Governing Body:	9th July 2026
Date of next Review due by:	July 2027

Appendix 1

PSHE education | Long-term overview

Harrow Way Community School

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 7	-Be Your Best -Friendships	-Democracy -What is Parliament?	-First Aid -Puberty	-Crime in the Community	-Keeping Safe	-Family -Bereavement
Year 8	-Human Rights	-Equality Act -Bullying and Discrimination	-Political Ideologies -British Values -Prevent	-Emotional Wellbeing	-Healthy Budget -Healthy Lifestyle	-Active Citizenship

Years 9, 10 and 11 receive PSHE as a part of a wider personal development carousel, including Careers, Citizenship, ICT, and RE. Each rotation will consist of approx. 9-11 weeks.

Year 9	-Growing Up	-Relationship and Sex Education	-Drugs Education	Citizenship	Careers	I.T
Year 10	-Sex and Relationship Education -Emotional Wellbeing			R.E	Careers	
Year 11	-Alcohol and Addiction	-Mental Health	Citizenship	RE	- RSE content	

Harrow Way Community School

Appendix 2

To be completed by parents			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationship and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider.			
Parent Signature			