



# St Hilda's School

HARPENDEN

*Caring, Curious & Confident*

## **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE) POLICY**

Name of Policy	Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy
Reviewed by	Dan Sayers Natalie Atkins
Review Date	August 2025
Next Review Date	July 2026
To be Read in Conjunction with	
Legislation Referenced	Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance 2025

Unless otherwise stated, all Policies of St Hilda's School apply to the school in its entirety. This comprises all staff and pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), the Junior School (Key Stage 1) and the Senior School (Key Stage 2).

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

We have based St Hilda's School Sex Education Policy on the DfE guidance document "Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education" (2025). The updated Statutory Guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2025 omits a formal definition of "sex education" but we continue to be guided by the definition of sex education in the previous 2019 guidance as "learning about physical, moral and emotional development. The aim of education is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It is about understanding the place of marriage in family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex and sexual health". We have also been guided by the PSHE Association PSHE Education Programme of Study (2014 and 2019).

## **2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION PROVISION**

As from September 2020, it is compulsory to teach Relationship and Health Education. Sex education and the PSHCE Framework are non-statutory; however, they are recommended by the Department of Education.

## **3. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER POLICIES**

RSE forms an integral part of the Subject Policy and the Subject Progression for Science and PSHCE. It also relates to the Safeguarding and Equal Opportunities policies.

## **4. STATEMENT OF VALUES FOR RSE**

RSE reflects the values of the PSHCE programme. It is taught in the context of the wide variety of healthy relationships around us. In addition, RSE promotes children's self-esteem, emotional well-being and mental health and helps pupils to form and maintain worthwhile and satisfying relationships, based on respect for themselves and for others, at home, at work and in the community.

## **5. AIMS OF THE RSE CURRICULUM**

RSE is part of the Science and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculum at St Hilda's School and aspects of RSE are taught throughout the school from Reception to Year 6. In this way, children are able to develop their ideas, knowledge and skills gradually and appropriately. The curriculum follows the guiding principle outlined in the 2025 guidance of "careful sequencing", recognising that young people can start developing healthy behaviour and relationship skills as soon as they start school. The curriculum is structured to allow pupils to be supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harms. All elements of the curriculum are taught in an age and stage-appropriate way, including ensuring it is accessible for pupils with SEND and is sensitive to all pupils' needs. The focus of the curriculum is for our pupils to develop the skills and knowledge needed to form positive relationships throughout their lives. Whilst we use sex education to inform children about sexual issues, we do this in the context of individual responsibility and matters of morality, and in a way that allows children to ask and explore moral questions. We do not use sex education as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation,

but as a way to increase knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

RSE contributes to the foundation of PSHCE by ensuring that all children:

- Develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about feelings and relationships
- Understand the characteristics of healthy friendships and a “safe and happy family life”
- Behave with kindness towards others and treat people with respect
- Are able to name parts of the body and describe how their bodies work
- Can protect themselves and ask for help and support
- Can recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse and how to report it and ask for help and support
- Are prepared for puberty
- Are aware of, and develop a respect for, different types of family
- Are taught how to stay safe online

RSE aims to:

- Provide information which is easy to understand and which is relevant and appropriate to the age and maturity of the children
- Include the development of communication and social skills
- Encourage the exploration and clarification of values, and the development of positive attitudes.

## **6. RSE CURRICULUM PLANNING**

The PSHCE and Science curriculum plans and Subject Progression plans highlight the areas which are taught within each year group and these are reviewed annually by the Heads of PSHCE and Science in order to ensure appropriate provision.

The biology of sex education is taught in Science lessons but the relationships aspect is tackled in both Science and PSHCE lessons.

The children learn about:

- The names for the main parts of the body, including external genitalia, and the similarities and differences between boys and girls
- The physical development of their bodies as they grow into adults
- How their emotions may change as they move through puberty
- The way humans reproduce
- Respect for their own bodies and the importance of sexual activity as part of a committed, long-term and loving relationship
- How to take care of their body, understanding that they have autonomy and the right to protect their body from inappropriate and unwanted contact; understanding what constitutes abuse, and understanding how to get support if they fear for themselves or their peers
- How to judge what kind of physical contact is appropriate, acceptable, comfortable, unacceptable and uncomfortable and how to respond (including who to tell and how to tell them)
- The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them
- The importance of family life and the differing types of family
- The responsibilities of being a parent
- Moral questions
- Relationships issues (physical and online)

- Respect for the views of other people
- Awareness and respect for differing types of relationships e.g. LGBTQ

## 7. TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGIES

A variety of teaching and learning strategies are used to deliver RSE which take into account pupils' age, development, understanding and needs. Pupils work in a safe, secure climate in order to be able to explore their own and others' attitudes and values.

Whole-class teaching methods are combined with group activities, with discussion forming a large part of the lessons. Clevertouch screens and smart boards enable lessons to be more interactive.

RSE lessons involve a high level of interaction where each pupil has opportunities for learning through:

- The development of a trusting relationship between the teacher and the pupils, enabling the consideration of sensitive issues to take place
- Opportunities for reflection
- Respect for each genuinely made contribution
- A 'Worry Box' is available to pupils. A pupil may ask a private question or express concerns which are then addressed by the pupil's mentor, form teacher or other relevant member of staff.

## 8. PUPILS WITH SEND

The curriculum recognises that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence and that RSE can therefore be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities. All material will be taught in a way that is accessible to pupils with SEND, having regard to any sensitivities and in an age and stage-appropriate way.

## 9. ASSESSMENT

Assessment (including peer and self-assessment in discussions) is an ongoing process during lessons as the teacher assesses the pupils' knowledge and understanding from their verbal answers in oral work and their written responses.

## 10. RESOURCES

A variety of age-appropriate resources – Web-based information, worksheets, case studies and books

## 11. PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

The School is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents and carers of the children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation.

To this end we:

- Inform parents about and make available the School's Relationships and Sex Education policy and practice via the school website

- Offer parent information sessions to allow parents to view resources and ask any questions they may have about the sex education of their child
- Refer children back to their parents if they have an inappropriate question or one that is not covered by our scheme of work

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the non-National Curriculum sex education. If parents wish to withdraw their child from the non-National Curriculum lessons, they should discuss this with the Headmaster, making it clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in, and must provide written notice of withdrawal.

## **12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE HEADMASTER, STAFF AND THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

The Headmaster will ensure that:

- RSE is provided in a way that encourages pupils to consider morals, the value of family life and the place of marriage
- Pupils are protected from inappropriate teaching materials
- A scheme of work is agreed and integrated with PSHCE, Science and the wider curriculum
- Parents are informed about the programme for RSE

The Headmaster will:

- Monitor the policy on a regular basis
- Report to the Board of Governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of this policy

The staff members who teach RSE are expected to:

- Provide RSE in accordance with this policy and in a way which encourages pupils to consider morals and the value of family life
- Participate in training, if available, to provide RSE in line with the school policy
- Implement the agreed schemes of work
- Draw to the attention of the Headmaster any materials which they consider to be inappropriate
- Respond appropriately to those pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-National Curriculum aspects of the curriculum.

The Board of Governors will:

- Monitor and review the Relationships and Sex Education Policy on a regular basis.
- Devolve the responsibility of updating the policy to the Headmaster in order to keep it up-to-date and to make it available to parents
- Ensure that sex education is provided in a way that encourages pupils to consider morals, the value of family life and the place of marriage.

**This policy will be reviewed annually by the Senior Management Team and Head of PSHCE in line with the school's review schedule for policies.**

