

DRAFT Paradigm Trust Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

March 2026 (review date tbc)

Introduction/context/rationale

This draft policy has been written and updated in line with the following:

- Department of Education (DfE) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025, to be implemented in September 2026.)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE),
- The Equality Act 2010
- as well as a formal engagement process with parents/carers.

Although there is no requirement to have a specific written Health Education policy, health content is included here in recognition that the content covered in Health Education may overlap with some of the content taught through Relationships Education, RSE and the National Curriculum for Science.

Statutory requirements

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make health education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some, or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Purpose and guiding principles of Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education

Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE)

can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right.

Safeguarding and well being of pupils are an important focus of the updated 2025 guidance. We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that there is a common understanding of the role of effective RSHE teaching in promoting the safety and wellbeing of all children.

Definitions

Definition of Relationships Education (primary)

Relationship Education is lifelong learning about physical, social, moral and emotional development. It is developing an understanding of family life, the importance of stable and loving relationships, including marriage, respect, love and care.

Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (secondary)

RSE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. It also gives pupils essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful, consenting and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and off line.

Explanation of right to withdraw

Primary

The Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools. Parents/carers **do not** have the right to withdraw pupils from Relationships Education.

Parents/carers of primary pupils **do** have the right to withdraw their children from Sex Education other than that which is included in the National Curriculum for Science. As a Trust, we believe it would be better for pupils not to be withdrawn. Paradigm Trust takes the view that RSHE is a crucial aspect of education, preparing pupils for a fulfilling and safe future.

Secondary

Parents/carers **do not** have the right to withdraw pupils from Relationships Education. Parents/carers **do** have the right to withdraw their child from some aspects of Sex Education. This does not include what is taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science. Before granting a request to withdraw a pupil, the principal will discuss the value and importance of RSHE with parents. A pupil can request Sex Education without their parent's consent from three terms before their 16th birthday.

	Relationships Education	Health Education	Sex Education	Science
Primary	All pupils must take part - no right to withdraw	All pupils must take part - no right to withdraw	Not taught in primary. Only taught in Y6 (parent carer right to withdraw)	All pupils must take part - no right to withdraw
Secondary	All pupils must take part - no right to withdraw	All pupils must take part - no right to withdraw	Taught in all year groups (Parent/carer right to withdraw up to 3 terms before 16th birthday)	All pupils must take part - no right to withdraw

Scheme of work/ implementation

Relationships Education and Health Education are taught across the Trust through the Jigsaw PSHE scheme of work (see Jigsaw topic overviews) in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Lessons are taught in a stepped approach with a gradual build up of knowledge from year to year. Content from the National Curriculum for Science is included in related areas. The content covered in Health Education may overlap with some of the content taught through Relationships Education, RSE and the National Curriculum for Science as well as other subjects, so this will reinforce content and concepts for students. For example, the National Curriculum for Science in key stage 2 includes learning about the changes to the human body as we develop to old age.

Related statutory content taught from the National Curriculum for Science is listed in the content section of this document.

Delivering our RSHE Curriculum

We recognise that good RSHE is only possible in the context of provision of high quality PSHE and an ethos which views this learning as an important part of the everyday fabric of the school, rather than isolated, compartmentalised lessons. Some parts of RSHE will be covered through broader PSHE, some through specific provision and some through other subject areas and enrichment activities.

RSHE is a continuous process of learning, which begins well before pupils enter our schools and continues into adulthood. Therefore, we follow a progressive curriculum appropriate to age groups and pupils changing needs. All adults in our Trust schools have a part to play in supporting the aims of RSHE and ensuring these are reflected in our school environment and its day to day management.

Teaching Methodologies

RSHE is taught in a safe, non-judgemental environment where adults and pupils are confident that they will be respected. Specific ground rules are established at the beginning of any work, in addition to those already used in the classroom. These will include:

- Appropriate use of correct language
- The importance of confidentiality within the lesson
- Identifying appropriate people with whom they may wish to share personal information/ to seek advice from.

If pupils ask questions that are not part of the allowed curriculum content, teachers will explain that they are not permitted to answer or discuss and they may learn about this content in later years, or they may choose to ask their parents.

All staff who deliver RSHE are given regular training opportunities and support to ensure that lessons are of high quality.

Use of visitors to support RSHE

We believe that RSHE is most effectively taught by those who know our pupils well and are aware of their needs. We may invite external visitors into our schools who may enhance, but never replace, our planned provision. We will closely work with visitors to ensure that the needs of our pupils are met.

Equality

The Jigsaw scheme of work is fully compliant with the Equality Act 2010. We carefully consider all backgrounds when planning and delivering RSHE. In relation to pupils with SEND, we ensure our lessons take into account levels of vulnerability, clarity of support for pupils and involvement of particular staff for the support of those children who may have particular needs.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Pupils with SEND are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues. RSHE is particularly important for these pupils; for example those with learning disabilities or social, emotional and mental health needs.

Resources may be adapted at points throughout the teaching and learning to best suit the needs of our pupils including those with SEND. This is in line with "Preparing for Adulthood" outcomes which are set out within the SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender content

The Trust is committed to fostering an environment of equality and respect. By the end of their secondary education, pupils will have learned about all **protected characteristics**, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment.

- At Primary Level: We focus on healthy, loving relationships, ensuring that discussions about families include same-sex parents alongside other family structures.
- At Secondary Level: Pupils explore the features of stable same-sex relationships and receive inclusive sexual health education.
- Facts and the Law: We teach the legal protections afforded to all individuals, as well as the distinction between biological sex and the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.

On matters of significant public debate, our schools remain neutral. We do not teach contested views - such as universal gender identity - as fact, nor do we promote social transition as a simple solution to distress. Our goal is to ensure all pupils are treated with dignity, while encouraging them to express their own views respectfully.

Taking into account different views

Parental Partnership and Curriculum Transparency

In line with DfE guidance, the Trust operates a policy of full transparency. Parents and carers are invited to view all materials and lessons before any content is taught, ensuring they are fully informed and empowered to continue conversations at home. While parents do not have a veto over curriculum content, we actively consult with them during the development and review of our RSHE policies to ensure a collaborative approach. We recognise that our community holds a range of opinions; therefore, we prioritise building positive relationships with families to ensure a constructive context for these subjects.

Our planning takes the background of all pupils into account so that topics are appropriately handled and different perspectives - such as various views on marriage - are included where appropriate. We do not enter into contracts with external providers that would prevent us from being open with our parents, and we utilise secure methods to share materials in compliance with copyright law.

Jigsaw provide a 'parent portal' where parents and carers can view materials. Where possible we will use this service to share resources.

Curriculum Content

Relationships (primary)

- The focus for primary relationships education is on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Children will learn skills for managing difficult feelings in their friendships, like disappointment or anger.
- We are sensitive to children's circumstances and recognise that that families of

many forms provide a nurturing environment for children, and can include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers.

- Primary relationships education is primarily about positive relationships, but is also about giving pupils the tools to keep themselves and others safe, and to recognise and report risks and abuse, including online.

By the end of primary school, pupils will cover the following topics as part of relationships education:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being Safe

Sex education (Primary)

Sex education is **not** compulsory in primary schools. At primary level, we choose **not** to teach any sex education that goes beyond the National Curriculum for Science in all year groups apart from Year 6. In line with statutory guidance, parents/carers have the right to withdraw from this Year 6 content if they wish. In primary (Year 6 only), pupils will cover these topics in Sex Education:

- concepts of consent, sexual exploitation, grooming
- reproductive health and fertility, and how this can be affected by lifestyle choices (e.g. alcohol, drugs)
- basic facts around sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- basic facts around contraceptive choices

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE): Secondary

- RSE in secondary provides a clear progression from primary relationships education. RSE provides young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. This includes the knowledge they need in later life to keep themselves and others safe, and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies.
- Effective RSE focuses on respect for oneself and others and does not encourage or normalise early sexual experimentation. By supporting confidence and self-esteem, RSE will enable young people 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.

- RSE in secondary covers a range of topics, including topics related to abusive behaviour. While teaching children how to stay safe, including online, teachers are clear that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child or young person. Different forms of abuse are addressed sensitively and clearly at appropriate ages. For pupils who are experiencing or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships, including at home, school plays an important role as a place of consistency and safety where pupils can find support.

Secondary relationships and sex education curriculum content

Knowledge of primary-specified topics is further developed as required, with the following content being mastered by the end of secondary school:

- Families
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being Safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Health and wellbeing

Primary

The aim of teaching about health and wellbeing is to enable pupils to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to understand the links between physical and mental health, to recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others and to seek support when needed.

Curriculum content related to puberty and menstruation is complemented by sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation, including with requests for period products. Appropriate language is used for example period pads and menstrual products instead of sanitary items or feminine hygiene products.

Health education in primary school starts with focussing on the benefits and importance of physical activity, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and supports pupils to develop emotional awareness.

The relationship between physical health and mental wellbeing is emphasised, and the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors made clear.

The following health and wellbeing content is covered by the end of primary:

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

Health and wellbeing: Secondary

Teaching in secondary builds on primary content, supporting pupils to understand their changing bodies and their feelings, how to protect their own health and wellbeing, and when a physical or mental health issue requires attention

In line with the guidance recommendations, issues which are not listed in the secondary curriculum content are also covered where appropriate. This includes topics such as eating disorders and self-harm. Many aspects of suicide prevention are addressed through the mental wellbeing curriculum.

Secondary health and wellbeing curriculum content

Knowledge of topics specified for primary is developed and in addition cover the following content is taught by the end of secondary:

- Mental wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- The impact of online influencers and harmful sub-cultures,
- The negative influence of pornography
- How to identify misinformation and disinformation, including conspiracy theories.
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention, and understanding the healthcare system
- The risks of online gambling and the importance of pelvic floor health and pre-conception health.
- Personal safety

- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

Related content taught through the statutory National Curriculum for Science

KS1

- Identify, name, draw and label basic parts of the human body
- Notice that animals including humans have offspring which grow into adults

KS2

- Describe the differences in the lifecycles of a mammal, an amphibian, and insect and a bird
- Describe the life processes of reproduction in some animals and plants
- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

KS3

- Reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta

KS4

- Communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDs)
- Sex determination in humans

Further detail about each of these primary and secondary topics can be found in the DfE guidance paper: [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education guidance](#)

Openness with parents about RSHE materials

We are committed to proactively engaging parents to ensure they are fully informed about the RSHE curriculum. We invite parents into school to discuss lesson content, emphasise the importance of RSHE for student safety and wellbeing, and provide a space to address any concerns. Furthermore, we aim to support parents in navigating these sensitive topics with their children at home. In line with statutory requirements, we will formally consult parents whenever we develop or review our RSE policy to ensure a

collaborative approach.

We are committed to full transparency regarding our RSHE materials and will provide parents with access to a representative sample of resources to help them continue these important conversations at home. While parents do not have the right to veto curriculum content, we will ensure that all teaching materials are available for review upon request.

To protect intellectual property while maintaining transparency, we will primarily share materials through a secure **parent portal** or via school presentations. When accessing these resources, parents must agree not to copy or redistribute them in accordance with copyright law. If a parent cannot access the portal or attend a presentation, we will provide physical copies for home review, provided the same copyright protections are respected.

Teaching about the law

We recognise that there may be a range of opinions in our community on RSHE content. Our starting principle is that applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear about their rights and responsibilities as citizens in modern Britain.

Addressing sexual harassment and sexual violence

Preventing sexual harassment and violence starts with a whole-school culture of kindness and respect. From the earliest years, we teach our pupils how to navigate boundaries, respect others, and identify prejudice.

Staff are conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes, and should take action to build a culture where prejudice is identified and tackled.

Pupils are taught the importance of challenging harmful beliefs and attitudes and should understand the links between sexism and misogyny and violence against women and girls.

Safeguarding

Discussions about sensitive topics in RSHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff have up to date safeguard training and know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused, including those who have seen, heard or experienced the effects of domestic abuse. The Department for Education publishes

the statutory safeguarding guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE); this guidance provides a strong safeguarding framework and is clear on the actions a school or college should take if there are any concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing and/or safety. Staff are also aware of mandatory reporting duties, including relating to FGM.