# Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

# September 2026

**Inspire • Enrich • Enjoy • Succeed**

*'Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven.'*

Matthew, 5:16

We **inspire** a love of learning, confidence and resilience; to strive to shine before God and others.

Our unique curriculum **enriches** well-being, learning attitudes, and the ability to fulfil potential; **enjoying** a life according to God's teaching.

We are a Christian family, celebrating faith, individuality and diversity, giving the opportunity to **succeed**.

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| **Approved by:** | Governing Body | **Date:** | 13th May 2026 |
| **Last reviewed:** | May 2026 | | |
| **Implementation from:** | | September 2026 | |
| **Latest Consultation:** | | 8th June to 17th July 2026 | |

***This policy has been revised to reflect the statutory DfE guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and will be implemented from September 2026.***

Compassion ● Forgiveness ● Hope ● Justice ● Respect ● Honesty ● Love

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## Foreword

New RSHE guidance for schools in England was published by the DfE in July 2025 for implementation by September 2026. This brings welcome clarity on next steps for RSHE in schools, and a contemporary focus that builds positively on the existing guidance from 2019. Schools must update their programmes and policy to meet this new guidance by September 2026.

Statutory guidance published from the DfE (July 2025) states '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.'

At the Federation of Snape Community & Thornton Watlass Church of England Primary Schools (STW), we consider an understanding of healthy relationships to be an integral part of the growing process, and we strive to create a learning environment and curriculum to reflect this. The proposed changes reflect current research and good practice.

## 1. Aims

The aims of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) at our school 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
- Create a culture (both on and offline) of understanding what healthy relationships are

Commented [CB1]: Suggest adding in 'on and offline line '

At STW our aim is to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum that takes our children's age, background, SEN needs and sensitivity into account.

## 2. Statutory requirements

At STW, our Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) provision is delivered in line with all current statutory requirements. The legal duties placed on schools remain in force and continues to shape the content and structure of our curriculum.

Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, as set out in 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. In addition, the National Curriculum for Science requires the teaching of human reproduction and related biological content, which forms a statutory element of sex education in primary schools. In addition this policy complies with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Under section 403 of the Education Act 1996, we are required to have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State when teaching RSHE. This duty remains current and is supported by the most recent updates to national RSHE guidance.

STW continues to meet all statutory obligations by delivering RSHE in accordance with this legislation and by ensuring our curriculum reflects the latest government guidance and expectations.

## 3. Policy development

This policy was developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – Mrs. Jane Wood has collated all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent & Governor consultation – parents and governors were given access to the policy and were given the opportunity to comment.
- Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSHE.
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was approved by Governors.

Parents will be informed of the updated policy and given the opportunity to feedback.

Commented [CB2]: 'feedback' rather than ' voice any concerns' to phrase it more positively

## 4. Definition

The term *Relationships, Sex and Health Education* – RSHE – is used in this policy as his places greater emphasis on equipping pupils with the **knowledge and skills to manage their physical and mental wellbeing, relationships, and personal safety.** This aligns with current DfE expectatios that children are supported to make informed and responsible decisions about their health, wellbeing and relationships. This comprises of:

- **Relationships Education (Statutory):** Mandatory for all primary pupils. It covers the themes "Families and people who care for me," "Caring friendships," "Respectful relationships," "Online relationships," and "Being safe".
- **Health Education (Statutory):** Includes understanding body changes, puberty, and the correct names for body parts (including genitalia) to reduce stigma and aid safeguarding.
- **Sex Education (Non-Statutory/Recommended):** The 2025 guidance emphasises teaching about conception and birth. At STW this is taught in Year 6 as part of a comprehensive curriculum. Our Sex Education lessons, which are supplementary to the statutory learning outcomes set out in the Key Stage 2 Science curriculum, are solely for children in Year 6 and are delivered through the Kapow materials and supporting lesson plans. These sessions answer the question: How are babies made? In an age-appropriate way, as part of the life cycle they explain how conception occurs, pregnancy and birth. Prior to these lessons being delivered a detailed letter is shared with parents and parents are always invited to view these materials prior to the lessons starting.

## 5. Why we teach RSHE

RSHE should help pupils to learn to respect themselves and others by acquiring accurate information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes.

RSHE involves the understanding of the importance of marriage for family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health and to enable pupils to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

RSHE helps keep children safe by allowing them to understand appropriate and inappropriate touching, to realise that their body is special and belongs to them.

It is about building the foundations of an understanding of consent and personal boundaries; in that no one has the right to touch them in a way they don't like but also the difference between public and private behaviours.

It is important for children to know the names and functions of their body parts and to be reassured it is natural to be curious about them. By teaching children from EYFS through to Year 6 the correct terms for their private body parts, children are proven to be safer from abuse.

The school has a key role, in partnership with parents/ carers in providing RSHE.

## 6. Curriculum

Our curriculum has been developed taking into consideration the age, needs and feelings of pupils. Any RSHE or PSHE lesson may consider questions or issues that some will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons, ground rules are established which try to minimise inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When pupils ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, sensitively and in an age-appropriate manner. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the pupils, the question may be dealt with individually including discussion with parents/carers at another time.

In science lessons the curriculum covers the development of humans in an age-appropriate manner. For this aspect of the school's teaching, we follow the guidance material in National Curriculum 2014. In EYFS and Key Stage 1 we teach children about how animals, including humans, move, feed, grow and reproduce, and we also teach them about the main parts of the body using the correct terminology for all body parts - seen and unseen. Children learn to appreciate the differences between people and how to show respect for each other. In Key Stage 2 we teach about life processes, reproduction, how their bodies change, the main stages of the human life cycle and evolution and inheritance in greater depth.

In Years 4, 5 and 6 the curriculum places a particular emphasis on health education, as many children experience puberty at this age. Teachers do their best to answer all questions with sensitivity and care. Teachers ensures that both boys and girls know how their bodies change during puberty, what menstruation is and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children. Parents have the right to withdraw their children in writing from sex education. However, they do not have the right to withdraw from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction *(refer to Section 9).*

Non-Statutory RSHE is also covered in the Early Years Foundation Stage setting as many of their Early Learning Goals address the requirements of the curriculum.

STW has adopted the Kapow PSHE Curriculum which ensures that the statutory content of the DfE guidance for RSHE is taught. This is underpinned by progressive and sequential RSHE objectives for EYFS, KS1 and KS2. Long term plans and the progression document are available on the school website.

**N.B**. *With regard to menstruation and puberty, sanitary products are available within school if needed and a disposal unit is situated in the girls' toilets. Girls also have the option of using a private (disabled) toilet if they so wish. When changing for PE, pubescent children have the option to change privately and the Year 5 and 6 children change separately.*

## 7. Delivery of RSHE

### 7.1 Context

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). RSHE is taught to all children and the consideration of children with special educational needs is considered at each step of delivery. At STW we have chosen a reputable scheme Kapow PSHE) to support lesson planning and delivery of statutory elements of RSHE.

The content of all RSHE lessons is available for parents and carers to view on request. We are committed to full transparency, and parents are welcome to review any materials used in teaching RSHE should they wish to do so. Requests should be made my emailing admin@stw.n-yorks.sch.uk .

Commented [CB3]: What would be the procedure for a parents & carer to make this request?

Relationships Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including the core themes of:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe (including first aid)

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, same sex families, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

### 7.2 Methodology and Resources

RSHE takes place within mixed sex classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant, with the pupils' usual class teacher. Should a teacher be absent, it would not be undertaken with a short-term supply teacher.

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that pupils are not put on the spot or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class. Teaching resources are selected based on their appropriateness to pupils and have been validated.

NSPCC resources are used and we participate in their assemblies and workshops:

- PANTS- NSPCC learning https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/underwear-rule-schools-teaching-resources/

### 7.3 Safeguarding

Children have the right to expect schools to provide a safe and secure environment. Teachers need to be aware that they bring fears or worries into the classroom that affect RSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship, this may lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. If this instance occurs Safeguarding procedures will be implemented.

### 7.4 Child Protection and Confidentiality

If a member of staff suspects there to be safeguarding issues involving a child or is faced with disclosure, then they have a duty to pass this information on to the DSL and use the procedures set out in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff need to make pupils aware they cannot legally give complete confidentiality. This can be tackled by revisiting ground rules at the beginning of each session. The lead person at STW is Mrs. Rebecca Sutcliffe, and in her absence Mrs. Jane Wood DDSL should be informed.

### 7.5 Health Professional Visitors

When visitors and outside agencies are involved, their contributions should complement the teaching already taking place in school.

- They can work with and give support to teachers
- They can provide links to relevant services
- They can inform pupils about using health services in the area
- Give pupils confidential support and advice

Health professionals who are involved in delivering RSHE programmes are expected to work within the school's RSHE policy and under the instruction of the head teacher. However, when they are in their professional role, such as a school nurse in consultation with an individual pupil, they should follow their own professional code of conduct.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

### 8.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body has approved the RSHE policy, and holds the headteacher, Mrs. Jane Wood, to account for its implementation.

### 8.2 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE.

### 8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way considering the requirements of individual children they teach
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher and PSHE lead, Mrs. Jane Wood.

### 8.4 Inclusion

Young people may have varying needs regarding RSHE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all pupils should have access to RSHE that is relevant to their particular needs. To achieve this, our school's approach to RSHE will take account of:

**The needs of all children both male and female.** We will consider the particular needs of boys and girls and approaches that will actively engage them. We shall also be proactive in combating sexism and sexist bullying.

**Ethnic and cultural diversity.** Different ethnic and cultural groups may have different attitudes to RSHE. The school will consult pupils and parents/carers about their needs, take account of their views and promote respect for, and understanding of, the views of different ethnic and cultural groups.

**Varying home backgrounds.** We recognise that our pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. We shall take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

**Sexuality.** According to national statistics, on average, about 5% of our pupils will go on to define themselves as Lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transgender (LGBT). Children may also have LGBT parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Our approach to RSHE will include sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. We shall actively tackle homophobic bullying.

**SEND.** We shall take account of the fact that some pupils may have learning, emotional or behavioural difficulties or physical disabilities that result in particular RSHE needs.

**The teaching programme for Relationship and Sex Education.** We intend that all pupils shall experience a programme of relationships and sex education at a level which is appropriate for their age and physical development, with adaptations for those whose cognitive development needs.

**Pupils who use alternative methods of communication.** Some pupils have physical, visual or hearing impairments or are unable to use speech and may use signing, symbols and/or communication switches and aids. The staff will adapt their teaching of RSHE to ensure that these pupils have equal access. (For example, writing with symbols or use of a computer programme which includes 'private' body parts).

**Pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties** are not excluded from the programme. Using appropriate methods, they will experience most of the basic content; self-awareness, gender awareness, body recognition, privacy.

**Pupils with autism** may require individual teaching to meet their specific needs. Explicit teaching and use of pictures and visual aids is essential to avoid confusion.

## 9. Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents **do not** have the right to withdraw their children from relationships and health education*.

Parents **do** have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE*.

** Refer to section 4 for clear definitions.*

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher. School are required to record if a pupil is withdrawn from the sex education.

Commented [CB4]: This is where having a specific definition for sex education and setting out the specific lessons is going to be useful for both the parent and staff. This will make it clear it does not include lessons on puberty as these are statutory under health education.
School do now have to record if a pupil is withdrawn from the sex education so you may want to add this to the policy so parents & carers are aware

## 10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The head teacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or other health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

## 11. Monitoring

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by Mrs. Jane Wood (PSHE lead) through monitoring arrangements such as; planning, book scrutiny, learning walks, lesson observations and staff and pupil feedback.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed by Mrs. Jane Wood. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

Appendix 1

*The topics taught and ourlined below are inline with the RSHE guidance from the DfE. STW uses Kapow curriculum to deliver the teaching and learning content:*

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|---|---|
| Families and people who care about me | • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability<br>• The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives<br>• That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care<br>• That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up<br>• That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong<br>• How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed |
| Caring friendships | • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends<br>• The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties<br>• That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded<br>• That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right<br>• How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed |

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|---|---|
| Respectful, kind relationships | • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs<br>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships<br>• The conventions of courtesy and manners<br>• The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness<br>• That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including those in positions of authority<br>• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help<br>• What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive<br>• The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults |
| Online safety and awareness | • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not<br>• That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous<br>• The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them<br>• How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met<br>• How information and data is shared and used online |
| Being safe | • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)<br>• About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe<br>• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact<br>• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know<br>• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult<br>• How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard<br>• How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so<br>• Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources |