St Paul's
Church of England Primary School

St Paul's C.E. Primary School

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

School: St Paul's C.E. Primary School
Policy owner: Headteacher / RSHE Lead
Approved by: Governing Body / Trust
Date approved: October 2026
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1. Policy Statement

At St Paul's C.E. Primary School, we believe that high-quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an important part of preparing children for life.

Our RSHE curriculum helps pupils to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes they need to build positive relationships, understand themselves and others, make healthy and safe choices, recognise inappropriate or harmful behaviour, and know where to seek help.

Our approach is underpinned by our Christian ethos and our commitment to developing children who are **Ready, Respectful and Responsible**.

We want every child to understand that they are valued, that they have the right to be safe and respected, and that they have a responsibility to treat others with kindness, dignity and respect.

The curriculum is designed to be age-appropriate, inclusive, carefully sequenced and responsive to the needs of our pupils.

This policy has been developed with regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, updated July 2025 and in force from 1 September 2026. Schools must have regard to this guidance and must have an up-to-date published policy.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy has regard to:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory Guidance, DfE;
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Children and Families Act 2014;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Education Act 2002;
- National Curriculum for England;
- relevant Trust policies and procedures.

Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. Health Education is also compulsory in state-funded primary schools. Sex education beyond the statutory science curriculum is not compulsory at primary level.

3. Aims

Our RSHE curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- develop healthy and respectful relationships;
- understand the importance of family, friendship and caring relationships;
- recognise what makes a relationship positive, safe and respectful;
- develop self-respect, confidence and a positive sense of identity;
- understand and respect personal boundaries;
- understand that their body belongs to them;
- recognise appropriate and inappropriate physical contact;
- understand privacy and the importance of keeping themselves safe;
- recognise different forms of bullying and know how to seek help;
- understand how to behave safely and respectfully online;
- recognise harmful or inappropriate online content and contact;
- understand the importance of consent and respecting boundaries at an age-appropriate level;
- recognise signs of abuse, exploitation and harmful behaviour;
- know how and where to report concerns;
- understand puberty and the physical and emotional changes associated with growing up;
- understand the importance of physical and mental health;
- develop resilience and strategies for managing emotions;
- understand how to make healthy and responsible choices;
- develop respect for people who are different from themselves;
- prepare appropriately for the next stage of their education and life.

The DfE guidance places particular emphasis on positive relationships, boundaries, safety, recognising abuse, online safety and helping pupils know how to report concerns.

4. Our Christian Ethos

As a Church of England school, RSHE is taught within the context of our Christian vision and values.

We believe that every child is created with dignity and worth and should be treated with compassion, kindness and respect.

Our teaching will:

- promote dignity and respect for all;
- encourage pupils to value themselves and others;
- promote healthy, caring and respectful relationships;
- recognise the importance of forgiveness, compassion and responsibility;
- provide opportunities for pupils to consider moral and ethical questions;
- allow pupils to understand Christian perspectives alongside other viewpoints;
- ensure that religious perspectives are clearly identified as faith perspectives rather than presented as universal fact.

The DfE guidance specifically recognises that schools with a religious character may teach their distinctive faith perspective on relationships, while ensuring that teaching remains appropriate, balanced and respectful.

5. Curriculum Content

5.1 Relationships Education

Relationships Education is statutory throughout primary school.

Our curriculum covers the five areas identified within the DfE guidance:

Families and people who care for me

Pupils learn:

- that families provide love, care, security and stability;
- about different types of families;

- to respect differences between families;
- about healthy family relationships;
- that marriage and civil partnerships are legally recognised commitments;
- how to recognise when a family relationship makes them feel unhappy or unsafe;
- how to seek help.

The curriculum recognises a wide range of family structures, including single-parent families, same-sex parents, grandparents, foster families, adoptive families and kinship carers.

Caring friendships

Pupils learn:

- how to make and maintain friendships;
- what makes a healthy friendship;
- kindness, honesty, trust and respect;
- how to manage disagreements;
- how to resolve conflict safely;
- that violence is never an appropriate response;
- how to recognise an unhealthy friendship;
- how to seek help when needed.

Respectful relationships

Pupils learn:

- how to respect other people's needs and preferences;
- the importance of healthy boundaries;
- how to communicate effectively;
- how to manage conflict;
- how to express their needs appropriately;
- the difference between assertive and controlling behaviour;
- how to respect differences;
- self-respect and self-esteem;
- different forms of bullying;

- how to challenge stereotypes;
- how to seek help when concerned about harm or violence.

Online relationships and safety

Pupils learn:

- that online relationships should follow the same principles of respect as face-to-face relationships;
- how to manage peer pressure online;
- that people may not always be who they say they are online;
- how to recognise harmful content and contact;
- the importance of privacy and personal information;
- the risks associated with sharing images and information;
- where to report concerns;
- how online behaviour can affect others.

The DfE guidance specifically requires teaching around online relationships, privacy, image sharing, harmful contact and seeking help.

Being safe

Pupils learn:

- about personal boundaries;
- about privacy;
- that their body belongs to them;
- the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact;
- that some secrets should never be kept if someone is unsafe;
- how to respond to adults they know and do not know;
- how to recognise harmful relationships;
- who they can trust;
- how to report abuse or concerns;
- how to keep asking for help until they are heard.

6. Sex Education at St Paul's

Sex education is **not a compulsory component of primary education**, other than aspects contained within the statutory National Curriculum for Science.

At St Paul's, we recognise that pupils benefit from carefully planned, age-appropriate information about growing up and their changing bodies.

Our curriculum therefore includes appropriate teaching about puberty and human reproduction, including the content required within the Science curriculum.

Where the school chooses to provide sex education beyond the statutory Science curriculum, this will be:

- age and developmentally appropriate;
- carefully sequenced;
- factual and medically accurate;
- consistent with this policy;
- shared with parents in advance;
- taught by appropriately trained staff;
- delivered within a safe and respectful environment.

The current DfE guidance recommends that primary schools consider teaching sex education in Years 5 and/or 6, particularly in relation to conception and birth, and requires schools to consult parents about such content.

7. Puberty and Growing Up

Puberty education forms part of the statutory Health Education curriculum.

Pupils will learn about:

- physical changes during puberty;
- emotional changes;
- menstruation;
- personal hygiene;
- body development;
- managing feelings;
- seeking support;

- respecting changes experienced by others.

Teaching about puberty is part of compulsory Health Education and therefore cannot be withdrawn from by parents. Parents also cannot withdraw children from statutory Science content, including relevant content about puberty and sexual reproduction.

8. Human Reproduction and Conception

Where human reproduction is taught as part of the Science curriculum, teaching will follow the National Curriculum and will be factual and age appropriate.

Where the school provides additional sex education relating to conception and birth, this will be clearly identified as additional sex education and parents will be informed.

Parents will be provided with information about the content and will have the right to request withdrawal from additional sex education.

9. Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents have a right to request that their child is withdrawn from **some or all sex education that is additional to the statutory Science curriculum**.

Parents do **not** have the right to withdraw their child from:

- Relationships Education;
- Health Education;
- statutory Science;
- teaching about puberty within Health Education;
- teaching about sexual reproduction within the Science curriculum.

Where a parent requests withdrawal from additional sex education, the Headteacher will meet with the parent to discuss the request, explain the content and purpose of the teaching, and discuss the potential benefits and implications of withdrawal.

Where a primary school provides additional sex education, the Headteacher must grant the request to withdraw, except where the content forms part of the Science curriculum.

If a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide appropriate and purposeful education during the lesson.

10. Inclusion and Equality

RSHE will be taught in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

We will ensure that no pupil is discriminated against because of:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage or civil partnership;
- pregnancy or maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

Teaching will promote equality, respect and dignity.

Pupils will be taught to challenge bullying, prejudice, stereotypes and discriminatory language.

The DfE requires RSHE to be taught in a way that does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

11. Families and Sexual Orientation

Pupils will learn that families can take many forms and that all children deserve to experience love, care, security and respect.

Teaching will include different family structures, including families with same-sex parents, alongside other family arrangements.

The purpose is to ensure pupils understand that families may look different while maintaining a focus on healthy, loving and respectful relationships.

The DfE specifically encourages primary schools to include same-sex parents alongside other family arrangements when discussing families.

12. Gender, Sex and Respect

Where age-appropriate discussion arises about sex, gender or gender reassignment, the school will follow current DfE statutory guidance.

Teaching will be factual, age appropriate and respectful.

Pupils will be taught:

- the importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect;
- that bullying or discriminatory behaviour is unacceptable;
- that people may have different views;
- how to express their views respectfully;
- relevant facts and law where appropriate;
- to avoid stereotypes and discriminatory assumptions.

The school will not promote particular political or ideological positions.

Where there are areas of legitimate debate, pupils will be supported to express views respectfully while understanding the importance of equality and dignity.

13. SEND and Accessibility

RSHE will be accessible to all pupils, including pupils with SEND.

Teaching may be adapted through:

- simplified language;
- visual resources;
- repetition and overlearning;
- social stories;
- concrete examples;
- additional adult support;
- alternative communication methods;
- pre-teaching;

- smaller group work;
- individualised approaches where appropriate.

The school recognises that pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour and bullying.

RSHE will therefore be used as an important safeguarding tool for pupils with additional needs.

14. Safeguarding

RSHE forms an important part of our whole-school safeguarding approach.

Staff will be alert to the possibility that discussions may lead pupils to disclose information about abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour or domestic abuse.

All staff must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and report concerns immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL.

Staff must:

- never promise confidentiality;
- listen calmly;
- avoid leading questions;
- record concerns accurately;
- follow the school's safeguarding reporting procedures;
- pass concerns to the DSL without delay.

The DfE specifically highlights that RSHE lessons can lead to safeguarding disclosures and that staff must know how to respond in accordance with KCSIE.

15. Teaching About Abuse and Harm

Children will be taught age-appropriate protective behaviours, including:

- understanding personal boundaries;
- recognising unsafe behaviour;
- understanding that abuse is never the child's fault;
- knowing that they can say no to inappropriate contact;

- recognising grooming and manipulation at an age-appropriate level;
- identifying trusted adults;
- knowing how to report concerns;
- understanding that they should keep asking for help until they are heard.

The school will ensure that protective education does not create unnecessary fear or alarm.

16. Online Safety

Online safety is embedded throughout RSHE and the wider curriculum.

Pupils will learn about:

- safe online communication;
- online friendships;
- privacy;
- personal information;
- image sharing;
- peer pressure;
- harmful content;
- grooming;
- fake identities;
- reporting concerns;
- the impact of online behaviour on others.

Where emerging online risks become relevant to pupils, the school may adapt teaching in response.

Parents will be informed where significant changes are made to the published curriculum, particularly where sensitive topics need to be addressed in response to identified safeguarding concerns.

17. AI, Deepfakes and Image Sharing

As pupils become increasingly exposed to artificial intelligence and digitally manipulated content, the school will develop age-appropriate understanding of:

- manipulated images;
- AI-generated content;
- deepfakes;
- privacy;
- image sharing;
- the permanence of online content;
- pressure to share images;
- seeking help when inappropriate images or content are encountered.

Teaching will be proportionate to pupils' age and maturity.

The DfE's current guidance specifically identifies AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes within the wider legal and online safety context.

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18. Teaching About Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence

The school will teach children from an early age about kindness, respect, boundaries and appropriate behaviour.

As pupils mature, teaching may address:

- respectful communication;
- sexism;
- stereotypes;
- harmful language;
- sexual harassment;
- inappropriate behaviour;
- consent and boundaries at an age-appropriate level;
- online sexual harassment;
- harmful sexual behaviour;
- where to seek help.

The school will challenge harmful attitudes while avoiding language that stereotypes boys as perpetrators or girls as victims.

The DfE states that prevention of sexual violence begins in primary education through teaching positive relationships, boundaries, respect and recognition of prejudice.

19. Teaching Methods

RSHE will be taught using a range of age-appropriate approaches, including:

- whole-class teaching;
- discussion;
- stories;
- scenarios;
- role play where appropriate;
- videos;
- visual resources;
- individual reflection;
- paired and group activities;
- question-and-answer activities.

Teachers will establish clear expectations for respectful discussion.

Pupils will not be expected to disclose personal experiences during lessons.

The school will use a question box or similar mechanism where appropriate so that pupils can ask questions anonymously.

20. Handling Sensitive Questions

Pupils may ask questions that go beyond the planned curriculum.

Teachers will:

- answer questions appropriately and factually where it is suitable to do so;
- consider the age and maturity of the pupil;

- avoid introducing content that is inappropriate for the class;
- signpost pupils to a trusted adult where necessary;
- encourage parents/carers to support conversations where appropriate;
- follow safeguarding procedures if a question indicates a concern about a pupil's safety.

Teachers are not expected to answer every question immediately.

Where a question relates to content that the school does not teach, the teacher may explain that it is not part of the school's curriculum and provide appropriate guidance or signposting.

The DfE expects schools to explain in their policy how staff will manage questions which go beyond the school's planned sex education.

21. Safe Learning Environment

RSHE lessons will establish clear ground rules, including:

- listen respectfully;
- no laughing at another person's question;
- no personal disclosures;
- use appropriate language;
- respect different families and experiences;
- everyone has the right to pass on a question;
- no pupil is pressured to participate in personal discussion.

Teachers will model respectful language and behaviour.

22. Confidentiality

Teachers cannot promise pupils absolute confidentiality.

Pupils will be informed that if they disclose information that suggests they or another child may be at risk of harm, the member of staff will need to share this with the appropriate safeguarding staff.

The school will explain this clearly and sensitively.

23. Curriculum Organisation

RSHE is delivered through the school's wider **PSHE / Personal Development curriculum**, alongside relevant content within:

- Science;
- Computing;
- PE and physical health;
- Religious Education;
- English;
- safeguarding education;
- online safety education;
- assemblies and collective worship where appropriate.

The curriculum will be carefully sequenced from Early Years through Year 6 so that knowledge and skills build progressively.

The DfE recommends that RSHE is developed as part of a whole-school approach and complements other curriculum areas rather than unnecessarily duplicating them.

24. Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, children will develop foundations for Relationships Education through the Early Years curriculum.

This includes:

- forming relationships;
- understanding feelings;
- developing friendships;
- managing emotions;
- understanding similarities and differences;
- personal care and hygiene;

- developing independence;
- understanding boundaries;
- learning to communicate their needs;
- beginning to understand how to stay safe.

Teaching will be appropriate to children's developmental stage.

25. Curriculum Progression

Reception

Focus on:

- friendships;
- feelings;
- families;
- kindness;
- sharing;
- turn-taking;
- personal space;
- trusted adults;
- basic body awareness;
- keeping safe.

Years 1 and 2

Focus on:

- families and people who care for us;
- friendships;
- kindness and respect;
- managing feelings;
- recognising bullying;
- personal boundaries;

- privacy;
- safe and unsafe situations;
- online safety;
- seeking help.

Years 3 and 4

Focus on:

- healthy friendships;
- conflict and resolution;
- peer pressure;
- respectful relationships;
- stereotypes;
- self-esteem;
- online relationships;
- privacy and image sharing;
- recognising harmful behaviour;
- puberty preparation.

Years 5 and 6

Focus on:

- developing and maintaining healthy relationships;
- boundaries and consent;
- peer pressure;
- respectful communication;
- puberty and menstruation;
- emotional wellbeing;
- online relationships;
- harmful online content;
- image sharing and digital permanence;
- safeguarding;

- age-appropriate sex education;
- conception and birth where included;
- preparing for secondary school.

This progression will be reviewed regularly to ensure that content reflects pupils' needs and the latest statutory guidance.

26. Resources and External Providers

The school will only use resources that are:

- age appropriate;
- evidence informed;
- medically and factually accurate;
- consistent with this policy;
- accessible to pupils with SEND;
- appropriate to the school's context and Christian ethos.

Where external providers are used, the school remains responsible for the content and delivery.

The school will:

- check the provider's credentials;
- view lesson plans and materials in advance;
- ensure content is appropriate;
- ensure safeguarding arrangements are clear;
- ensure the provider understands the school's safeguarding procedures;
- make materials available to parents in accordance with the DfE guidance.

The DfE makes clear that responsibility for RSHE remains with the school even where external organisations are involved.

27. Parent Engagement

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children about relationships, values and growing up.

The school will therefore seek to work positively with parents by:

- consulting parents when developing and reviewing this policy;
- publishing the policy on the school website;
- providing information about the curriculum;
- sharing representative curriculum resources;
- making teaching materials available to parents on request;
- providing opportunities for parents to ask questions;
- providing information about additional sex education before it is taught;
- signposting parents towards reliable sources of information.

Parents are not able to veto statutory curriculum content, but the school will actively engage with parents and respond positively to requests to view RSHE materials.

28. Pupil Voice

The school will seek pupils' views about RSHE where appropriate.

Pupil voice may be gathered through:

- questionnaires;
- discussions;
- pupil leadership groups;
- class discussions;
- feedback following units of work.

Pupil feedback will be considered when reviewing the curriculum and identifying emerging needs.

29. Staff Training

Staff delivering RSHE will receive appropriate guidance and support.

Training will include, where relevant:

- curriculum content;
- safeguarding;
- managing disclosures;
- handling sensitive questions;
- online safety;
- SEND accessibility;
- current statutory requirements;
- use of appropriate resources.

Staff should feel confident to deliver the curriculum without causing unnecessary alarm and should understand their safeguarding responsibilities.

30. Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSHE Lead will monitor the quality and impact of RSHE through:

- curriculum reviews;
- lesson visits;
- planning scrutiny;
- pupil voice;
- staff feedback;
- parent feedback;
- assessment information;
- review of safeguarding and behaviour data where relevant.

The school will evaluate whether pupils are developing the intended knowledge, skills and understanding.

Monitoring will focus on impact rather than simply checking that lessons have taken place.

31. Assessment

RSHE is not assessed through formal examinations.

Teachers will use appropriate formative assessment to identify:

- what pupils know;
- misconceptions;
- vocabulary development;
- understanding of relationships and safety;
- areas requiring reinforcement.

Assessment may include:

- questioning;
- discussion;
- retrieval activities;
- written work;
- reflection activities;
- quizzes;
- pupil voice.

32. Safeguarding and Recording Concerns

Any disclosure or safeguarding concern arising during RSHE will be dealt with in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Staff will:

1. listen carefully;
2. remain calm;
3. not promise confidentiality;
4. avoid leading questions;
5. record the concern accurately;
6. report immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL;
7. follow the school's safeguarding recording and referral procedures.

The school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy takes precedence where there is a safeguarding concern.

33. Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if:

- statutory guidance changes;
- legislation changes;
- safeguarding concerns identify a need for amendment;
- curriculum developments require changes;
- consultation with pupils or parents identifies improvements;
- the Trust updates its expectations.

Parents and pupils will be appropriately consulted as part of policy review.

Appendix 1 – Parent Information: What Will My Child Learn?

Relationships Education – Statutory

Your child will learn about:

Families

- different types of families;
- love, care and security;
- healthy family relationships;
- seeking help if a relationship feels unsafe.

Friendships

- making friends;
- kindness;
- trust;
- managing disagreements;
- recognising unhealthy friendships.

Respect

- boundaries;
- communication;
- self-respect;
- bullying;
- stereotypes;
- treating others with dignity.

Online Safety

- online friendships;
- privacy;
- sharing information and images;
- harmful content;
- online pressure;
- reporting concerns.

Being Safe

- personal boundaries;
- privacy;
- appropriate and inappropriate contact;
- trusted adults;
- reporting abuse;
- knowing that abuse is never a child's fault.

These areas are based on the statutory DfE end-of-primary Relationships Education content.

Appendix 2 – Additional Sex Education

Where St Paul's provides sex education beyond the statutory Science curriculum, parents will be informed in advance about:

- the content;
- the year group;
- the resources being used;
- the intended learning outcomes;
- the parent's right to request withdrawal.

Parents will be able to view relevant teaching materials.

The school will ensure that any additional sex education is age appropriate, factual, carefully sequenced and delivered by appropriately prepared staff.

Appendix 3 – Parent Questions and Answers

Is Relationships Education compulsory?

Yes. Relationships Education is compulsory for primary pupils.

Can I withdraw my child from Relationships Education?

No. Parents do not have a right to withdraw children from statutory Relationships Education.

Can I withdraw my child from Health Education?

No. Health Education is statutory in state-funded primary schools.

Can I withdraw my child from Science?

No. Parents cannot withdraw children from statutory Science.

Can I withdraw my child from puberty education?

No, where puberty is taught as part of statutory Health Education or Science.

Can I withdraw my child from additional sex education?

Yes. Where the school provides sex education beyond the statutory Science curriculum, parents have the right to request withdrawal.

Can I see what my child is being taught?

Yes. The school will provide information about the curriculum and parents can request access to relevant teaching materials.

Will children be taught about different families?

Yes. Children will learn that families can take different forms and that all families should be treated with respect.

What happens if my child asks a question about sex?

Teachers will respond appropriately to the child's age and the curriculum. Some questions may be answered in class; others may be referred to a trusted adult or parent where this is more appropriate.

What if my child tells a teacher something worrying during an RSHE lesson?

The teacher will follow the school's safeguarding procedures. Staff cannot promise confidentiality if a child may be at risk of harm.

Appendix 4 – Key Principles for Children

At St Paul's, we want every child to remember:

I am important.

I deserve to be treated with kindness and respect.

My body belongs to me.

I can tell a trusted adult if something makes me feel unsafe or uncomfortable.

I respect others.

I listen, communicate kindly and respect other people's boundaries.

I can ask for help.

If something worries me, I should tell a trusted adult and keep asking until someone listens.

I can be safe online.

I think carefully about what I share, who I talk to and what I see.

I am never to blame for abuse.

If something happens that makes me feel unsafe, it is not my fault.