New Rush Hall School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Reviewed:
October 2026

Due for review:
October 2027

CONTENTS

AIMS 3
STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS 3
POLICY DEVELOPMENT 3
DEFINITION 3
CURRICULUM 4
DELIVERY OF RSHE 4
USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS 6
ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES 6
The Governing Body: 6
The Headteacher: 6
Staff: 6
Pupils: 7
PARENTS/CARERS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW 7
Primary: 7
Secondary: 7
TRAINING 7
MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS 8

AIMS

The aims of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) at New Rush Hall School (NRHS) 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, relationships and health, including mental health.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Support pupils to build the emotional and social skills that underpin our SEMH ethos.

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

As a maintained all-through school, NRHS must provide:

- Relationships Education to all pupils receiving primary education, in accordance with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to all pupils receiving secondary education, in accordance with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.
- Health Education to all pupils.
- The relevant elements of sex education contained within the National Curriculum for Science.

In teaching Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education, NRHS must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. This policy reflects the revised statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education which comes into force on 1st September 2026.

NRHS will also ensure that its provision is consistent with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, and that teaching is inclusive, appropriate and accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and Parents/Carers, and reflects the updated statutory guidance in force from 1st September 2026, alongside our redesigned PSHE and RSHE curriculum. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – relevant statutory guidance, national and local guidance, and the school's existing RSHE provision and curriculum were reviewed.
- Staff consultation – staff were given the opportunity to review the policy and curriculum and make recommendations.
- Parent/Carer/stakeholder consultation – Parents/Carers were invited to review the draft policy and supporting curriculum information and provide feedback.
- Pupil consultation – pupils' views about RSHE, including the content and delivery of the curriculum, were sought in an age-appropriate and accessible way.
- Ratification – feedback from the consultation process was considered and appropriate amendments were made before the final policy was presented to the Governing Body for approval.

DEFINITION

RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, physical and mental health, diversity and personal identity.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

CURRICULUM

Our curriculum is set out in our curriculum map* but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary, including for individual pupils' developmental stage and needs.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with Parents/Carers, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Primary RSHE will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings.
- How a baby is conceived and born.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map*.

DELIVERY OF RSHE

RSHE is taught primarily through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Relevant biological aspects are also taught through the Science curriculum and, where appropriate, learning is reinforced through Religious Education (RE) and other curriculum areas.

Our PSHE and RSHE curriculum follows a planned, progressive and spiralling approach from Year 1 to Year 11. Learning is revisited at increasing levels of complexity so that pupils can build securely on prior knowledge and develop the understanding, language and skills they need as they grow. Across the school, the curriculum is organised around the broad themes of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living in the Wider World.

Pupils may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by an appropriately trained specialist facilitator through our external provider, Big Talk Education. Any external provision is planned as part of the school's wider RSHE curriculum and is subject to the school's arrangements for quality assurance, safeguarding and parental transparency.

Primary

At primary phase, Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory. Pupils are also taught the relevant statutory content within the National Curriculum for Science.

Our primary curriculum develops pupils' understanding progressively across Key Stages 1 and 2. Teaching includes:

- Families and the different ways in which families provide care, support and belonging.
- Caring friendships, kindness, inclusion, cooperation and resolving disagreements.
- Respectful relationships, including recognising and challenging stereotypes, prejudice and bullying.
- Permission, personal boundaries, body autonomy and respecting the choices of others.
- Personal safety, including recognising safe and unsafe situations, appropriate and inappropriate touch, identifying trusted adults and knowing how to seek help.
- Online relationships, digital safety, responsible use of technology and recognising risks associated with online content and communication.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing, including recognising and managing emotions, self-regulation, resilience and accessing support.
- Physical health and healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, physical activity, sleep, personal hygiene, dental health and making informed health choices.
- Growing and changing, including correct anatomical vocabulary, puberty, menstruation, wet dreams, personal hygiene and the physical and emotional changes associated with adolescence.
- Increasing independence, financial awareness, media literacy, safe decision-making and preparation for transition.

As pupils move through Key Stage 2, teaching builds progressively on earlier learning about permission, body safety and relationships to develop a deeper understanding of consent, personal boundaries, puberty, healthy relationships, online influences and safeguarding.

In addition to statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and Science, NRHS provides age-appropriate sex education at primary phase where this supports pupils' preparation for adolescence and secondary education. The content of this provision, and the parental right to request withdrawal from sex education that goes beyond the National Curriculum for Science, is set out later in this policy.

Secondary

At secondary phase, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education are statutory. Teaching builds directly upon knowledge and concepts introduced during the primary phase and develops these at an age and developmentally appropriate level.

The secondary curriculum includes:

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships, including trust, respect, communication, equality, personal boundaries and the characteristics of positive relationships.
- Consent, including freedom and capacity to consent, communicating and withdrawing consent, readiness for intimacy and recognising the impact of pressure, persuasion, manipulation and coercion.
- Respectful relationships, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, gender stereotypes, misogyny, gender-based violence and the influence of harmful online cultures and narratives.
- Safeguarding within relationships, including recognising abuse, exploitation and controlling or coercive behaviour, alongside specific risks including female genital mutilation and forced marriage.
- Online relationships and media, including social media, image sharing, pornography, misinformation, artificial intelligence, deepfakes and non-consensual intimate imagery, together with the associated legal, emotional and safeguarding implications.
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health, contraception, sexually transmitted infections, risk reduction, communication within intimate relationships and accessing appropriate health and support services.
- Families and committed relationships, including marriage, civil partnerships, parenting, family diversity and the responsibilities associated with stable adult relationships.
- Fertility and reproductive health, including how fertility changes over time, pregnancy, miscarriage, different routes to parenthood, unplanned pregnancy and pregnancy choices.
- Mental and physical health and wellbeing, including emotional regulation, resilience, anxiety and depression, self-harm, body image, healthy coping strategies, sleep, nutrition and accessing appropriate support.
- Drugs and substances, including medicines, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine and vaping, together with understanding risk, peer influence, addiction and informed decision-making.
- Preparation for adult life, including financial wellbeing, online spending and gambling-related risks, media and digital literacy, careers, future pathways, independence and accessing health and support services.

Healthy relationship values, communication skills, personal safety and understanding of consent are reinforced across the wider curriculum and revisited as pupils mature.

INCLUSIVE AND RESPONSIVE DELIVERY

These areas of learning are taught sensitively within the context of family life and the diversity of modern Britain. Teaching avoids stigmatising pupils because of their home circumstances and recognises that families and support networks may take many forms, including single-parent families, families with LGBT parents/carers, families headed by grandparents, adoptive families, foster families and other family structures. Teaching also reflects sensitively the experiences of pupils who may have different structures of support around them, including Children Looked After and Young Carers.

Given the SEMH and SEND needs of pupils at NRHS, delivery is adapted where necessary to enable all pupils to access their statutory entitlement safely and meaningfully. This may include small-group teaching, 1:1 sessions, adapted language and resources, additional processing time, repetition and revisiting of concepts, structured ground rules, distancing techniques and individual follow-up from key adults. The pace and method of delivery may be adapted according to pupils' developmental stage, communication needs, cognition, emotional needs and individual circumstances.

RSHE is delivered in a safe learning environment using agreed ground rules, age and developmentally appropriate discussion, distancing techniques, opportunities for pupils to ask questions safely and clear signposting to trusted adults and support services. Specialist 1:1 teaching or follow-up may be provided where this is required because of a pupil's individual needs or vulnerability.

A curriculum overview is published on the school website showing the areas taught to each year group across the academic year. Our full PSHE and RSHE curriculum documentation provides further information about learning objectives, prior knowledge, key vocabulary, sequencing and cross-curricular links and is available to Parents/Carers on request. Parents/Carers may also request to view the curriculum materials used to teach RSHE.

USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS

When using external agencies and materials to support the delivery of RSHE, including our external provider Big Talk Education, we will:

- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach, and the resources it uses, including their suitability for pupils with SEMH needs.
- Ask to see in advance any materials and lesson plans the agency will use and be clear on what they will say and their position on the issues discussed.
- Check the credentials of the visitor/organisation and ensure a member of staff is present throughout any session.
- Agree in advance how confidentiality will work, and how any safeguarding disclosures should be handled, in line with our safeguarding policy.
- Share all external materials with Parents/Carers on request.

We will ensure that the use of external organisations and materials is consistent with the school's statutory duties, including those relating to safeguarding, equality and political impartiality. External organisations will not be used where the school is not satisfied that their approach, content or materials are appropriate for our pupils or consistent with these duties. External providers must also be willing to make the materials they use available for Parents/Carers to view on request.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body:

The Governing Body will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation. The Governing Body will also ensure that RSHE is well led, effectively managed and planned, appropriately resourced and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND, and that the quality of provision is subject to regular evaluation.

The Headteacher:

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, that the requirements of this policy are implemented and for managing requests from Parents/Carers for pupils to be withdrawn from sex education in accordance with the statutory guidance and the arrangements set out below (see Parents' right to withdraw).

Staff:

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way.
- 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.

RSHE is delivered by appropriately trained members of staff, including staff with specific responsibility or expertise in PSHE and RSHE. Relevant curriculum content may also be delivered or reinforced by teachers within Science, RE and other curriculum areas.

We also use an external training provider, Big Talk Education, to run sessions with pupils.

Pupils:

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

PARENTS/CARERS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

Primary:

Parents/Carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or any content taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science.

Parents/Carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from any sex education delivered at primary phase which goes beyond the National Curriculum for Science. The Headteacher will automatically grant such a request.

Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's withdrawal request form. The school will offer Parents/Carers the opportunity to discuss the request so that the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the content from which the pupil will be withdrawn are clear.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will provide appropriate and purposeful alternative education during the period of withdrawal.

Secondary:

Parents/Carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or content taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science.

Parents/Carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher using the school's withdrawal request form.

Before reaching a decision, the Headteacher will discuss the request with the Parent/Carer and, where appropriate, the pupil. This discussion will clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, the reasons for the request, the benefits of receiving sex education and any potential effects of withdrawal. A record of the request and discussion will be retained.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the Parent/Carer's request up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. From this point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education, the school will make arrangements for them to receive it during one of those three terms. Pupils will be made aware that they have this right.

The same process applies to pupils with SEND. In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher may take account of a pupil's specific needs or vulnerabilities when considering a request.

Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will provide appropriate and purposeful alternative education during the period of withdrawal.

TRAINING

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar, including trauma-informed approaches to sensitive topics.

The school may also draw upon appropriate external professionals, such as School Nurses, Sexual Health professionals and specialist RSHE providers, to provide advice, support and training to staff involved in delivering RSHE.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The quality and delivery of RSHE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team and relevant curriculum leaders through the school's established quality assurance processes. These may include curriculum reviews and deep dives, learning walks, lesson visits, scrutiny of curriculum planning and pupils' work, pupil voice and review of assessment information.

Pupils' knowledge, understanding and development within RSHE are monitored through the school's assessment processes, taking account of pupils' individual starting points and needs.

The school will also consider feedback from pupils, staff and Parents/Carers when evaluating the effectiveness and accessibility of RSHE provision.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where there are significant changes to statutory guidance, legislation or the school's curriculum. The policy will be approved by the governing body following each review.

** Further information about the PSHE and RSHE curriculum, including year-group curriculum overviews, is available on the school website. Parents/Carers may request a copy of the school's full PSHE and RSHE curriculum documentation, view curriculum materials used to teach RSHE, or request a withdrawal form by contacting the school at admin@nrhs.redbridge.sch.uk.*