Relationship and sex education policy

St Peters Church of England Primary School



October 2026

Contents

1. Aims 2
2. Statutory requirements 3
3. Policy development 3
4. Definition 4
5. Curriculum 4
6. Delivery of RSE 4
7. Use of external organisations and materials 7
8. Roles and responsibilities 8
9. Parents' right to withdraw 9
10. Training 9
11. Monitoring arrangements 9
Appendix 1: Curriculum map (Including PSHE) Relationships and Health Education 10
Appendix 2: Relationship curriculum mapping in My Happy Mind and My Happy Mind Plus 11
Appendix 3: Sex Education Curriculum – Medway 12
Appendix 4: By the end of primary school pupils should know 14
Appendix 4: Parent/carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE 17

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) 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, empathy and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and compassion
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Make appropriate reference to and affirm the principles of the School's Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy
- Help pupils understand that throughout our lives we flourish when we have positive relationships with others
- Provide pupils with knowledge and understanding so that they can recognise, create and maintain healthy relationships with others throughout their lives

As a church school, we are committed to relationships and sex education that enables all children to have the appropriate knowledge and information about physical processes, as appropriate to their age, and to be able to engage with the moral and spiritual aspects of relationships. As required by the Church of England, we frame our teaching within the beliefs of the school while acknowledging that there is a range of ways in which people make sense of their relationships.

Our school aims to meet its obligations under the public sector equality duty by having due regard to the need to

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained primary school, we must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

The Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 state that Relationships Education is compulsory in all primary schools.

We are required to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At St Peter's C of E Primary School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy. The Department for Education statutory guidance for Health Education, Relationships Education and RSE outlines that schools must cover: mental health and wellbeing, physical health (including healthy lifestyles and first aid) and learning about safe, healthy relationships, including understanding consent and negotiating life online.

Refer to the Online Safety Policy for more on the PSHE and RSE elements regarding online safety.

3. Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

4. Definition

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

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

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is delivered through My Happy Mind and My Happy Mind Plus, which incorporates all statutory guidance for Relationships Education and Health Education, enriched by the My Happy Mind programme.

Please refer to the PSHE policy and Appendix 1 for more information on the My Happy Mind Plus programme. We may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

In addition to this, our sex education programme is delivered in stand-alone sessions by staff in Year 4, 5 and 6. We follow the Medway Relationships and Sex Education Programme.

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

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

Primary sex education 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 in Appendix 1.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum using My Happy Mind and My Happy Mind Plus. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Pupils in Year 4, 5 and 6 receive a stand-alone sex education programme using the Medway Relationships and Sex Education Programme which is delivered by the Year 4, 5 and 6 staff. From September 2026, this may change as we look at introducing the Sex Education elements in the My Happy Mind Plus curriculum.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Consent – See also the school's Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1, 2 and 3

In ‘consent’ lessons the children learn about the following areas: giving and asking permission; personal boundaries/space and what is appropriate and inappropriate touch.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and 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).

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate material to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will make sure that all pupils’ views are listened to, and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the pupils.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to make sure both are actively involved.

The school will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in and age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance, and share any relevant materials on request.

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

Sex Education Programme

In Year 4, 5 and 6 we follow the Medway Relationships and Sex Education Programme. This introduces aspects of puberty including biological changes that happen to the body, menstruation, wet dreams, how to deal with changes in emotions and the importance of personal hygiene.

We include the specific teaching of the ‘facts of life’ within the two-year programme for year 5 and 6. For this we use the PSCHE Association linked to the Medway resources. Year 5 will learn about both the emotional and biological changes that will be occurring during adolescence. In Year 6 this includes a recap on puberty and the emotional and biological changes, positive, healthy relationships and how a baby is made, how they grow, are born and how they should be cared for.

Involvement of Parents

We encourage parents to talk to their children about the specific lesson content and issues relating to morality and religion. To support these discussions, parents are able to view any RSE materials on request and can access the topics taught in the My Happy Mind Parent App and in Appendix 3 for the Medway Sex Education content.

Approaches to sensitive issues

In keeping with the overall ethos of RSE, sensitive issues will generally be discussed in class by individual teachers as and when any questions arise. However, by the time the children finish their primary education, certain issues which could possibly put them at risk need to have been addressed. It is important that sensitive or controversial issues should not be avoided as this does not make them go away and can leave the child confused and possibly at risk. It is natural for caring adults to want to protect children from information, attitudes and lifestyles which they themselves find distasteful. However, it is important to recognise the power and confusion of informal learning – e.g.: the internet, TV, magazines, gossip, jokes and the wider community. Learning about sensitive issues needs to be positive. A 'crisis-led' or 'problem-led' curriculum is invariably inadequate and can be damaging.

Prejudice-based incidents

A prejudice-based incident is a one-off incident of unkind or hurtful behaviour that is motivated by a prejudice or negative attitude, belief, or view towards a protected characteristic or minority group. It can be targeted towards an individual or group of people and have a significant impact on those targeted. All prejudice-based incidents are taken seriously and recorded and monitored in school, with the headteacher reporting incidents to the governing body. This not only ensures that all incidents are dealt with accordingly, but also helps to prevent bullying as it enables targeted anti-bullying interventions.

Safeguarding

The children are to promote their own self-esteem and their skill of assertiveness (e.g.: the ability to say 'no') without feeling guilt or embarrassment. The same goes for sexual matters and skills of self-expression including appropriate language and understanding, which should also be discussed and approached without shame, guilt or embarrassment.

The class teacher can play a significant part in detecting the early signs of abuse. Correct procedures must be followed as outline in the Statutory Guidance – **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (September 2026) and our own **Policy for Child Protection** and our **Policy on Harmful Sexual Behaviour**, (available on our school website.)

Online safety

Online safety education will enable all children to discuss and explore appropriate relationships and behaviour when using computers and other technology online. We will embed the concept of consent, mental wellbeing, healthy relationships and staying safe online. It will also raise awareness of the use of AI in generating intimate images and the use of financial extortion and the sharing of intimate pictures online. Our RSE teaching will include what healthy positive and respectful online relationships look like, the effects of pupils' online actions on others and knowing how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online. This will be taught and discussed in an age-appropriate way. Please refer to our **Online Safety Policy** for more information.

6.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
    - Safe and supported
    - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
    - A whole-class setting
    - Small groups or targeted sessions
    - 1-to-1 discussions
    - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

6.2 Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
    - Are age-appropriate
    - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
    - Comply with:
        - This policy
        - The Teachers' Standards
        - The Equality Act 2010
        - The Human Rights Act 1998
        - The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses

- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
    - What they're going to say
    - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The governing body

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from components of RSE (see section 9).

8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Subject Lead for RSE: Alice Rassell

Headteacher: Sam Wilding

Staff responsible for delivering the RSE curriculum: all teaching staff and HLTAs

8.4 Pupils

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

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education or health education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 4 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

Alternative school work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

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

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Alice Rassell, Subject Lead for RSE, through: planning scrutinies, learning walks, discussion with class teachers.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the PSHE leader and Headteacher annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

Appendix 1: Curriculum map (Including PSHE) Relationships and Health Education

Curriculum Content and Delivery

Strand	Module/ Content Pillars	Description/ Core Content
myHappymind	Meet Your Brain	Helping children to understand how their brains work and teaching strategies for regulation such as Happy Breathing.
	Celebrate	Building children's self-esteem through recognising and celebrating their Character Strengths.
	Appreciate	Developing an Attitude of Gratitude! Teaching children the importance of thinking about what we are grateful for and sharing this with others.
	Relate	Introducing relationship-building skills such as Active Listening to ensure children have the foundations to form friendships, be heard and understand others.
	Engage	Introducing the power of Goal Setting to children so that they aspire, dream and learn to persevere.
myHappymind Plus	myHappybody	**Health & Wellbeing:** Healthy Lifestyles (Physical Wellbeing), Mental Health, Ourselves, Growing and Changing, Keeping Safe and Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco
	myHappyworld	**Living in the Wider World:** Shared Responsibilities, Communities, Media Literacy and Digital Resilience, Economic Wellbeing: Money, Economic Wellbeing: Aspirations, Work & Career
	myHappyrelationships	**Relationships:** Families and Close Positive Relationships, Friendships, Managing Hurtful Behaviour and Bullying, Safe Relationships, Respecting Self and Others

Appendix 2:

Relationship curriculum mapping in My Happy Mind and My Happy Mind Plus



https://import.cdn.thinkific.com/60422/mcUmZnIzRUeKrFD2wYJF_PSHE%20Association%20Mapping%20Document.pdf

Appendix 3:

Sex Education Curriculum - Medway

MEDWAY PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTORATE

Changing and growing up

Lesson plans and resources for Year 4-5



Lesson plans.....2

Lesson 1: Time to change.....2

Lesson 2: Menstruation and wet dreams.....6

Lesson 3: Personal hygiene.....11

Lesson 4: Emotions and feelings.....16

Resources.....20

Lesson 1.....20

Lesson 2.....26

Lesson 3.....31

Lesson 4.....33

A BETTER MEDWAY
Easier ways to be healthy

MEDWAY PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTORATE

Changing and growing up

Lesson plans and resources for Year 6



Lesson plans 2

Lesson 1: Puberty recap 2

Lesson 2: Puberty: Change and becoming independent 6

Lesson 3: Positive, healthy relationships 10

Lesson 4: How a baby is made 15

Resources 20

Lesson 1 20

Lesson 2 23

Lesson 3 30

Lesson 4 32

A BETTER MEDWAY
Easier ways to be healthy

Appendix 4: By the end of primary school pupils should know

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 • 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 • 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 • 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 • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • 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 • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • 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 • 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
Respectful 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 • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • 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 • 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 • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online relationships	• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • 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 • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • 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) • 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 • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

MEDWAY PUBLIC HEALTH DIRECTORATE

Changing and growing up

Lesson plans and resources for Year 4-5



Lesson plans 2

Lesson 1: Time to change 2

Lesson 2: Menstruation and wet dreams 6

Lesson 3: Personal hygiene 11

Lesson 4: Emotions and feelings 16

Resources 20

Lesson 1 20

Lesson 2 26

Lesson 3 31

Lesson 4 33

A BETTER MEDWAY
Easier ways to be healthy

Appendix 4: Parent/carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers	