

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

St Mary's CE Primary School and Nursery



Approved by:

Governors

Date:

Last reviewed on:

September 2025

Next review due by:

September 2026

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

1. Introduction

St Mary's CE Primary School and Nursery is committed to providing a high-quality Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum in line with the latest Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance (July 2025, for implementation by September 2026). This policy is reviewed annually and in consultation with staff, parents, pupils, and governors.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy is based on:

- Education Act 2002, Section 80A
- Education Act 1996, Section 403
- Children and Social Work Act 2017, Sections 34 and 35
- DfE Statutory Guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025)

Definitions:

Term	Definitions
Relationship Education	Statutory curriculum in primary schools, focusing on the building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults.
Sex Education	Education about human reproduction, sexual health, and sexual relationships. In primary schools, this is non-statutory except for content covered in the science curriculum. Any additional sex education is delivered from Year 5 onwards and only from a scientific perspective.
Health Education	Statutory teaching covering physical health, mental wellbeing, and the changing adolescent body, including puberty and menstrual wellbeing.
Puberty	The physical, emotional, and hormonal changes that occur as children grow into adults, including the development of secondary sexual characteristics and the onset of menstruation.
Menstrual Wellbeing	Education about the menstrual cycle, menstrual hygiene, and awareness of conditions such as endometriosis and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS).
Online Safety	<p>Content: Pupils are taught about risks from harmful online content, including AI-generated content, deepfakes, scams, and online misogyny.</p> <p>Contact: Lessons include recognising and reporting unsafe contact, privacy, and boundaries.</p> <p>Conduct: Pupils learn about respectful online behaviour, cyberbullying, and how to challenge harmful stereotypes.</p> <p>Commerce: The policy references scams and influencers, which covers commercial risks online.</p>
Protected Characteristics	As defined by the Equality Act 2010: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.
Gender Reassignment	A protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010. Refers to a person who is proposing to undergo, is undergoing, or

	has undergone a process (or part of a process) to reassign their sex.
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3. Policy Aims

Our RSE curriculum aims to:

- Equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to form healthy, respectful relationships.
- Teach the correct vocabulary for all body parts from an early age.
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of growing up, including puberty and menstrual wellbeing.
- Promote online safety, including awareness of AI-generated content, deepfakes, scams, and online misogyny.
- Foster respect for diversity, including all family types and protected characteristics.
- Support pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including understanding grief, loss, and loneliness.
- Ensure all content is age-appropriate, evidence-based, and delivered sensitively.

4. Curriculum Content

a. Relationships Education (Statutory)

- Families and people who care for me (including diverse family structures)
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships (including tackling misogyny and harmful stereotypes)
- Teaching children that their private parts are private, the importance of saying no, talking to trusted adults, and understanding that their body belongs to them. **PANTS rule (NSPCC)**
- Online relationships (including risks from AI, deepfakes, scams, and influencers)
- Being safe (including personal safety in public spaces, water, road, and rail safety)

b. Health Education (Statutory)

- Mental wellbeing (including grief, loss, loneliness, and age-appropriate suicide prevention)
- Changing adolescent body (including puberty, menstrual wellbeing, and awareness of conditions such as endometriosis and PCOS)

c. Sex Education (Non-statutory in Primary)

- Sex education will only be delivered from Year 5 onwards, and solely from a scientific perspective.
- No sex education will be delivered before Year 5.
- The concept of gender identity will not be taught; teaching will focus on biological sex and gender reassignment as a protected characteristic.

5. Delivery and Teaching

- RSE is delivered through PSHE, science, and other relevant subjects.
- Lessons are age-appropriate, inclusive, and differentiated for SEND pupils.
- Staff use correct terminology for all body parts and functions.
- Staff are trained to deliver sensitive topics, challenge harmful stereotypes, and respond to safeguarding disclosures.
- Interactive and distancing techniques are used, with clear ground rules established.

6. Parental Engagement and Rights

- Parents have the right to view all RSE materials and resources used in class. The school will provide clear information on how to access these materials.
- The school will consult with parents when developing and reviewing this policy, and will provide examples of resources during consultation.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their child from sex education (non-statutory content) but not from relationships, science, or health education.
- Requests for withdrawal should be discussed with the headteacher and documented in writing.

7. Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

- The RSE curriculum is inclusive of all pupils, regardless of background, ability, or family structure.
- The curriculum fosters respect for all protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- SEND pupils may receive additional support or targeted programmes as needed.

8. Safeguarding

- Effective RSE supports safeguarding by helping pupils understand what is and is not appropriate in relationships.
- All staff follow the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance.
- Disclosures are handled in line with school safeguarding procedures.
- Pupils are taught, in an age-appropriate way, what sexual abuse might look like, including inappropriate touching, requests to keep secrets about body parts, or being shown inappropriate images. Pupils learn how to report concerns and that abuse is never their fault.

9. Monitoring and Review

- The policy is reviewed annually by the PSHE lead and leadership team, with input from staff, parents, and pupils.
- The school keeps a written record of RSE content and delivery.
- The policy will be updated in line with new statutory guidance and before September 2026.

10. Appendices

- Appendix 1: Statutory Learning Outcomes (updated for 2025 guidance)
- Appendix 2: Overview of RSE Scheme of Work
- Appendix 3: Sample Parent Letter (reflecting new rights and transparency)
- Appendix 4: DfE FAQs (updated for 2025 guidance)
- Appendix 5: Governor's Statement

Complaints Procedure

Any parents with concerns about this policy should discuss this directly with the head teacher. In the event that the concern cannot be dealt with, the governors can be contacted via the complaint procedure.

Annex 1: Statutory Learning Outcomes (2025 Guidance)

By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Area	Learning Outcomes
Families and People who care for me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance of families for love, security, and stability - Characteristics of healthy family life - Respect for different family structures - Marriage as a formal, legally-recognised commitment
Caring Friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Importance of friendships for happiness and security - Characteristics of healthy friendships - Managing ups and downs in friendships - How to seek help if a friendship is making them unhappy
Respectful Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Respecting differences - Practical steps to support respectful relationships - Courtesy and manners - Self-respect and happiness - Bullying (including cyberbullying) and how to get help - Stereotypes and their impact - Permission seeking and giving
Online Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differences in online behaviour - Principles of respect online - Keeping safe online (including AI, deepfakes, scams) - Critical thinking about online information - How data is shared and used online
Being Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate boundaries in friendships - Concept of privacy

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding the PANTS rule and how to recognise and report inappropriate behaviour. - Knowing that abuse can happen in different forms and how to seek help.” - Recognising and reporting unsafe contact - How to ask for help and keep trying until heard - Where to get advice
Changing Adolescent Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Key facts about puberty and emotional changes - Menstrual wellbeing, including awareness of conditions such as endometriosis and PCOS

Annex 2: Overview of RSE Scheme of Work

Year Group	Key Topics
Year 1	Families, friendships, respecting differences, naming body parts, basic online safety, PANTS rule (NSPCC)
Year 2	Caring friendships, privacy, personal boundaries, introduction to online relationships, PANTS rule revisited
Year 3	Respectful relationships, bullying, stereotypes, consent, personal safety, recognising inappropriate behaviour
Year 4	Online safety (including new risks), managing emotions, diverse families, reporting concerns, understanding secrets
Year 5	Puberty, menstrual wellbeing, introduction to sex education (scientific), online harms (AI, deepfakes), recognising sexual abuse, reporting
Year 6	Transition to secondary, advanced online safety, personal safety in public spaces, mental health, review of puberty and reproduction, safeguarding, knowing how to seek help

Appendix 3 Sample Parent Letter



St Mary's C.E Primary School and Nursery
Poynton Road
Shawbury
Shropshire
SY4 4JR

Dear Parents and Carers,

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

As part of our statutory curriculum, we will be delivering Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in line with the latest Department for Education guidance. Our curriculum includes the NSPCC PANTS rule and age-appropriate teaching about recognising and reporting abuse.

Our policy and all teaching materials are available for you to view on request. We are committed to working in partnership with you and welcome your feedback. You have the right to withdraw your child from non-statutory sex education (delivered from Year 5 onwards), but not from relationships, science, or health education.

If you wish to discuss the curriculum or view resources, please contact the school office.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs S A North

Email: admin@stmarys.empowermat.co.uk
Telephone: 01939 250323

Appendix 4

The following Frequent Asked Questions (FAQs) are based on the Department for Education's statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), updated July 2025 for implementation by September 2026. For the most up-to-date information, please refer to the DfE website.

Q: Why has the RSHE guidance been updated?

A: The government has updated the guidance to help schools address new challenges, such as harmful online content, misogyny, and unhealthy attitudes about relationships. The aim is to ensure all children develop positive attitudes, understand respect and kindness, and know how to keep themselves safe both online and offline.

Q: What will my child learn in RSHE?

A: In primary school, children will learn about positive relationships with friends and family, respect, kindness, and how to recognise and report abusive behaviour. They will also learn about personal safety (including water, road, and rail safety), online safety (including risks from AI, deepfakes, and online influencers), and the correct names for all body parts. In secondary school, pupils will learn about consent, positive role models, and how to challenge harmful attitudes they may encounter online or in real life.

Q: How will these topics be taught?

A: Teachers will create safe spaces for meaningful discussion, using age-appropriate materials and approaches. The guidance ensures that children are not taught things they are too young for, while allowing teachers to respond sensitively to topics children may have encountered outside school.

Q: Will I know what my child is learning?

A: Yes. Schools must be transparent with parents and provide access to all curriculum materials on request. Schools cannot enter into contracts with external providers that prevent parents from seeing the content used in lessons. Parents should be informed about what is being taught and have opportunities to view resources and ask questions.

Q: Can I withdraw my child from RSHE?

A: Parents have the right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education (delivered from Year 5 onwards in primary schools), but not from relationships education, health education, or science. If you wish to withdraw your child from sex education, you should discuss this with the headteacher.

Q: Can I see the materials used in RSE lessons?

A: Yes. All parents have the right to view the resources and materials used in RSE lessons. Please contact the school office to arrange this.

Q: How does the school ensure RSHE is age-appropriate?

A: All lessons are planned in line with statutory guidance and tailored to the age and developmental stage of pupils. Teachers use their professional judgement and receive training to deliver sensitive topics safely and appropriately.

Q: How are diverse families represented?

A: The curriculum is inclusive of all family types, including single-parent, same-sex, foster, adoptive, and kinship families. Lessons are designed to foster respect for all pupils and their backgrounds.

Q: What about online safety and harmful content?

A: There is a strong focus on online safety, including teaching children about privacy, consent, AI-generated content, deepfakes, scams, and how to challenge harmful online attitudes such as misogyny. Children are taught how to recognise risks and report concerns.

Q: How does RSHE support safeguarding?

A: RSHE helps children understand what is and isn't appropriate in relationships, how to recognise abuse, and how to seek help. It also teaches the correct vocabulary for body parts, which is important for safeguarding and reporting concerns.

If you have further questions, please contact the school office or visit the [DfE RSHE guidance page](#).

Annex 5 Governor's Statement

The governing body has reviewed and approved this policy in line with statutory requirements and best practice. Governors will monitor the implementation of the policy and seek feedback from all stakeholders annually.