



RELATIONSHIPS, SEX & HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

Approved: September 2026
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1. Aims

At Southway Junior School, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is taught within our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum and is supported by assemblies, safeguarding education and our broad and balanced curriculum. RSHE is a planned, progressive programme that helps pupils develop the knowledge, vocabulary, confidence and skills they need to keep themselves safe, build positive relationships, make informed choices and prepare for life in modern Britain.

In addition, relevant statutory and linked content is taught through:

- Science
- English
- Computing
- Art
- History
- Geography
- Religious Education (R.E.)
- Physical Education (P.E.)
- Assemblies, pastoral support and wider school life

Through our PSHE and RSHE programme, we aim to provide children with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. We consider effective RSHE to be a fundamental part of supporting pupils to grow into confident, caring, respectful and resilient members of the community.

The aims of RSHE at Southway Junior School are to:

- Provide a consistent, carefully sequenced standard of Relationships and Health Education across Key Stage 2.
- Help pupils develop self-respect, confidence, empathy, resilience, kindness and respect for others.
- Teach pupils how to form and maintain positive, healthy and respectful relationships, including online.
- Support pupils to understand personal boundaries, privacy, consent in everyday contexts, and how to seek help if they feel unsafe.

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- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe their bodies, including anatomically accurate names, so they can communicate clearly and safely.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and the emotional and physical changes of growing up, including menstrual wellbeing.
- Promote positive physical health and mental wellbeing, including self-care, help-seeking and the importance of healthy routines.
- Develop pupils' understanding of online safety, media literacy, online financial harms, privacy, personal data and age restrictions.
- Introduce pupils to personal safety education, including recognising and reducing risks around roads, railways, water, fire and unfamiliar situations.
- Support pupils to understand change, loss and bereavement in an age-appropriate and sensitive way.
- Ensure that pupils are well prepared for transition to secondary school and future RSHE learning.
- Combat exploitation, bullying, prejudice and harmful stereotypes through age-appropriate safeguarding education.

These aims complement those of the Science curriculum in Key Stage 2 and reflect Southway Junior School's values of respect, resilience, kindness and teamwork.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained junior school in England, Southway Junior School must provide Relationships Education to all pupils and must provide Health Education. The school 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. The Department for Education's revised statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education applies from 1 September 2026.

Primary schools are not required to provide sex education beyond the elements contained in the National Curriculum for Science. However, the Department for Education continues to recommend that primary schools have a programme tailored to the age and maturity of pupils to prepare them for the physical and emotional changes of adolescence and, drawing on the human life cycle content in science, how a baby is conceived and born. Southway Junior School therefore provides carefully planned, age-appropriate non-statutory sex education in upper Key Stage 2.

In teaching RSHE, the school will have regard to its legal duties, including:

- The Education Act 1996
- The Education Act 2002
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education and relevant safeguarding guidance

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➤ The National Curriculum for Science

The school will ensure that RSHE is accessible for all pupils, including pupils with SEND, and that teaching is inclusive, age-appropriate, evidence-informed and sensitive to pupils' backgrounds and experiences.

3. Guiding principles for RSHE

Our RSHE curriculum is guided by the following principles:

- Engagement with pupils: pupil voice informs curriculum review and helps staff understand pupils' questions, concerns and lived experiences.
- Engagement and transparency with parents and carers: parents and carers are consulted on the policy, informed about sensitive content and able to view curriculum materials on request.
- A positive approach: teaching focuses on healthy norms, positive attitudes, respect, kindness, self-worth and safe choices.
- Careful sequencing: knowledge and skills build progressively from Year 3 to Year 6 and support pupils' transition to secondary school.
- Relevant and responsive content: the curriculum reflects pupils' developmental stages, local context, safeguarding priorities and emerging risks, especially online.
- Skilled delivery: staff are supported through training and planning so that they can teach confidently and handle sensitive questions safely.
- A whole-school approach: RSHE links with safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, online safety, equality, mental health and pastoral support.

4. Definition

Within this policy, Relationships Education is defined as teaching about the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults, both offline and online.

Health Education is defined as teaching pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing, including the links between the two, healthy routines, personal safety, puberty, menstrual wellbeing, online wellbeing and when and how to seek help.

For the purpose of this policy, Sex Education refers to planned, age-appropriate teaching about human reproduction, conception and birth that is not otherwise part of statutory Science or Health Education. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity. This draws on knowledge learned in the statutory Science curriculum. In year 5 and 6 science lessons, the National Curriculum specifies children must learn: life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect and a bird; life processes of reproduction in some plants and animals, including mammals; describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

The wider PSHE curriculum also supports pupils' personal development, safety, financial awareness, citizenship, emotional literacy and preparation for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

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5. Curriculum

The UK Government's intent for RSHE is to ensure that pupils receive high-quality, age-appropriate education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. For Key Stage 2 children, the statutory guidance places emphasis on helping pupils understand the foundations of positive relationships, including families, friendships, respect for others, personal boundaries, online safety, physical health and mental wellbeing. The Government's aim is that pupils are equipped with the knowledge, vocabulary and confidence to make informed decisions, recognise risk, seek help when needed, develop resilience, and understand how to keep themselves and others safe. This curriculum also supports schools in promoting pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development, while contributing to a whole-school approach to safeguarding, wellbeing and preparation for life in modern Britain. Further information and detail about the RSHE curriculum and its coverage is available on the gov.uk website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

5.1 Relationships Education

Relationships Education focuses on the characteristics of positive, healthy relationships. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils will be taught about:

- Families and people who care for them, including that families can take different forms and should be characterised by love, care, safety and respect.
- Caring friendships, including trust, kindness, loyalty, managing friendship difficulties and recognising when a relationship is making them feel unhappy or unsafe.
- Respectful relationships, including courtesy, manners, self-respect, empathy, stereotypes, bullying, discrimination, permission-seeking and boundaries.
- Online relationships, including respectful online behaviour, privacy, personal information, digital footprints, age restrictions, harmful contact and where to get help.
- Being safe, including privacy, body autonomy, appropriate and inappropriate contact, secrets and surprises, trusted adults, reporting concerns and persisting until help is received.
- Communication skills, including assertiveness, listening, managing conflict, expressing needs and respecting the boundaries of others.
- Loneliness, inclusion and belonging, including how to seek help and support others appropriately.

Teaching about families will be sensitive to pupils' circumstances and will avoid stigmatising children based on their home lives. Families may include single-parent families, families with LGBT+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive families, foster families and other caring arrangements. Some pupils may also have different structures of support, including looked-after children and young carers.





5.2 Health and Wellbeing Education

Health Education focuses on the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils will be taught about:

- Mental wellbeing, including emotions, self-regulation, resilience, loneliness, self-care, hobbies, physical activity, community participation, help-seeking and reducing stigma.
- Internet safety and harms, including the benefits and risks of the internet, online conduct, harmful content, online abuse, misinformation, media literacy, personal data, privacy settings, location settings and how to report concerns.
- Online financial harms and digital influences, including scams, fraud, advertising, in-app purchases, gaming, video game monetisation and why some online services are age-restricted.
- Physical health and fitness, including the benefits of active lifestyles, risks of inactivity and how to seek help with health concerns.
- Healthy eating, including balanced diets, dental health and the risks associated with unhealthy choices.
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, including age-appropriate information about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks.
- Health and prevention, including sleep, sun safety, hygiene, germs, allergies, immunisation and vaccination.
- Basic first aid, including making an emergency call and dealing with common injuries.
- The changing adolescent body, including puberty, physical and emotional changes, menstrual wellbeing and the key facts about the menstrual cycle.
- Personal safety, including recognising hazards, assessing and reducing risk, and keeping safe around roads, railways, water, fire and unfamiliar situations.
- Change, loss and bereavement, including that people experience and express grief differently and where to seek support.

5.3 Statutory Science Curriculum Content

In addition to learning in RSHE, pupils learn statutory scientific concepts and knowledge in Science lessons. In Key Stage 2, this includes learning about nutrition, skeletons and muscles, digestion, teeth, life cycles, reproduction in some plants and animals, changes as humans develop to old age, the circulatory system, the impact of diet, exercise, drugs and lifestyle, and how nutrients and water are transported within animals including humans.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Science curriculum content.

5.4 Non-statutory Sex Education

As a junior school, we believe that pupils should receive clear, age-appropriate and factual information before they move to secondary school. This supports safeguarding, transition and pupils' personal development.

Southway Junior School teaches non-statutory sex education in Year 6, drawing on pupils' prior learning in Science, Health Education and Relationships Education. Content is taught sensitively,

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using agreed resources and with opportunities for parents and carers to view materials in advance. Prior to the delivery of the Year 6 SRE curriculum, parents and carers are invited annually to watch and review content. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from these non-statutory lessons only. Further information is set out in section 8 of this policy.

6. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is delivered in an age-appropriate, inclusive and sensitive manner by class teachers, supported by the RSHE/PSHE leader, senior leaders and, where appropriate, external visitors such as the school nurse. Visitors will be used to enhance teaching, not replace the responsibility of the teacher, and will be briefed on this policy and safeguarding expectations.

The school uses high-quality, trusted resources and guidance, including West Sussex Education 4 Safeguarding (E4S), the PSHE Association and 1Decision, alongside other approved materials where appropriate. Resources are reviewed before use to ensure they are accurate, age-appropriate, inclusive, evidence-informed, matched to pupils' needs and consistent with safeguarding and equality duties.

Teaching will normally take place in children's regular classes. Occasionally, pupils may be taught in smaller, larger groups or single-gender groups where this supports confidence, dignity or discussion, for example when addressing aspects of puberty and menstrual wellbeing. All pupils will receive the same core entitlement.

We aim to provide a learning atmosphere where children feel safe and relaxed, and where they feel confident to engage in discussions around potentially sensitive subjects and themes.

Ground rules in class and across the school are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter and teaching RSHE. Clear ground rules are established in partnership with the class, then reinforced at the start of each relevant lesson. These are underpinned by our school values of Respect, Resilience, Teamwork and Kindness and include:

- Listen respectfully and politely;
- Everyone has the right to contribute and the right to pass;
- No one has to answer a personal question;
- We use correct, respectful language;
- We do not share personal stories about others;
- We ask for help if something worries us;
- Questions answered in an age-appropriate and safeguarding-conscious way.

Dealing with sensitive issues and difficult questions

Pupils' questions will be handled honestly, sensitively and in an age-appropriate way. Staff may use distancing techniques, question boxes or follow-up conversations where appropriate. If a member of staff is unsure how to answer a question, they may seek advice and return to it later. Questions that raise safeguarding concerns will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff will not promise confidentiality. Pupils will be reminded that trusted adults may need to share information if someone may be at risk of harm.

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7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The Governing Body

The governing body will approve this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation. Governors will ensure that the policy is reviewed, published and informed by consultation with parents, staff and pupils as appropriate.

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, that staff receive appropriate training, that safeguarding procedures are followed, that resources are suitable, and that requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education are managed appropriately.

7.3 The RSHE/PSHE Leader

The RSHE/PSHE leader is responsible for supporting curriculum planning, reviewing resources, monitoring teaching and learning, supporting staff confidence, gathering pupil voice and ensuring that statutory requirements are mapped across the curriculum.

7.4 Staff

All staff are responsible for delivering RSHE sensitively, modelling positive attitudes, responding to pupils' needs, maintaining a safe learning environment, following safeguarding procedures and using school-agreed resources. Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff with concerns should discuss these with the Headteacher or RSHE/PSHE leader.

7.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage with RSHE, ask questions in a respectful way and treat others with respect and sensitivity.

7.6 Parents and carers

The school recognises that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children. We aim to build a positive relationship with families through consultation, transparency and communication. We will inform parents and carers about this policy, consult on significant changes, provide opportunities to view resources on request, respond to questions and concerns, and explain the right to withdraw from non-statutory sex education.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

As previously stated, parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory Science curriculum content, including learning about puberty and reproduction where this forms part of Science or Health Education.

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex education within RSHE, which happens in Year 6 at Southway Junior School. Parents wanting to withdraw their

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children are invited to speak to the class teacher. The class teacher will explore the concern of the parents and the possibility of adjusting the programme or approach and will discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. He/she will talk with the parents about the possible negative experiences or feelings that may result from withdrawal of the child and the ways in which these may be minimised. If the parent still wishes to withdraw the child, requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to both the class teacher and Headteacher.

The school will discuss the request, explain the curriculum and resources, consider any concerns and discuss the possible impact of withdrawal. If the parent or carer still wishes to withdraw their child, the request should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, they will receive appropriate alternative learning for the duration of the non-statutory sex education lesson. A record of withdrawal will be kept and shared only with staff who need to know.

9. Confidentiality and safeguarding

RSHE is taught within a safeguarding framework. If a pupil makes a disclosure or a member of staff has a concern that a child may be at risk of harm, this will be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Teachers cannot offer absolute confidentiality.

If a pupil indicates that they may have experienced abuse, exploitation, harassment or harmful behaviour, staff will respond calmly and follow safeguarding procedures. Where mandatory reporting duties apply, the school will act in accordance with the law and statutory safeguarding guidance.

10. Inclusion, SEND, equalities and diversity

Southway Junior School is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of school life. RSHE will be accessible to all pupils, including pupils with SEND. Teaching will be adapted where necessary so that all pupils can understand key messages, develop vocabulary and practise help-seeking skills.

Planning and resources will reflect the diversity of modern Britain and will comply with the Equality Act 2010. Teaching will be balanced, respectful and free from bias. Pupils will learn that prejudice, discriminatory language and bullying are unacceptable. Teaching about families and relationships will recognise that families may look different while emphasising love, care, stability, safety and respect.

RSHE is not used to promote any particular personal, political or religious view. Where issues are sensitive or may relate to different beliefs and values, teachers will present information factually and respectfully, in line with the law, safeguarding requirements and the school's values.

11. Resources

All RSHE resources will be selected and reviewed to ensure they:

- Meet statutory RSHE expectations and support the school's curriculum intent.

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- Are age-appropriate and matched to pupils' developmental stage.
- Are accurate, evidence-informed and from credible sources.
- Support pupils in applying knowledge and skills in real-life contexts.
- Are inclusive and accessible for pupils with SEND.
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and do not intentionally provoke distress.
- Support effective, participatory teaching.
- Comply with safeguarding, equality and professional standards.
- Teaching sequences and exemplar materials will be available on the school's website.
- Further resources can be shared with parents and carers on request, except where there are copyright restrictions; in such cases, parents and carers will be offered a reasonable opportunity to view materials.

12. Complaints procedure

Any complaints or concerns about the RSHE programme should be raised with the class teacher in the first instance. If concerns are not resolved, parents and carers may follow Southway Junior School's complaints procedure.

13. Monitoring and assessment

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the RSHE/PSHE leader and members of the Senior Leadership Team through planning reviews, learning walks, pupil voice, staff feedback, book looks where appropriate and curriculum mapping. Pupils' progress in RSHE is monitored by teachers through discussion, questioning, reflection activities and evidence of developing knowledge, vocabulary and skills.

The curriculum will be reviewed regularly to ensure it remains statutory compliant, age-appropriate, responsive to pupil need and aligned with safeguarding priorities.

14. The school environment

The wider school environment will reflect the values of respect for self and others. The school will:

- Use positive images and displays that celebrate difference and diversity.
- Ensure pupils know who they can speak to if they are worried.
- Provide opportunities for questions and private support where needed.
- Provide menstrual products and appropriate support for pupils who need them.
- Challenge discriminatory behaviour in any context.
- Promote the school values of respect, resilience, kindness and teamwork.

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15. Policy development, publication and review

This policy has been updated following review of statutory guidance for implementation from 1 September 2026, comparison with current RSHE practice and consideration of high-quality RSHE guidance and resources. The policy will be shared with staff, governors, parents and carers, and pupil voice will inform ongoing curriculum review.

This policy is available on the school website and hard copies are available from the school office on request. The policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier if statutory guidance or local safeguarding priorities change.

Related policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety / Acceptable Use Policy
- Equality Policy
- SEND Policy
- Religious Education Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy

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