



Introduction

This policy sets out and explains how we teach Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) at Isbourne Valley School. It has been developed following changes to the Department of Education's (DfE) expectations and following a period of consultation with parents, pupils, staff and governors. It applies from 1st September 2026.

Aims

The aims of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Teach pupils about health and wellbeing so they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing;
- Help pupils to understand the links between physical and mental health, how to recognise when something is not right in their own health or that of others, and know how to seek support;
- promote pupils' moral, social, mental and physical development;
- help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, self-worth, and empathy, and cultivate positive characteristics such as courage, kindness, honesty, trustworthiness and integrity;
- teach pupils how to keep themselves safe, including knowing who their trusted adults are and what to do if they find themselves in an uncomfortable situation;
- prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene; providing a supportive environment in which sensitive discussions can take place;
- teach pupils about, and make sure they understand, consent;
- create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships; and
- teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

Our school values (of friendship, resilience, courage, respect, perseverance, independence and fairness) are woven into every aspect of life at Isbourne Valley School.

Our vision is that:

Isbourne Valley School is a small, friendly, caring and happy school in a beautiful, rural setting. From their first day with us the children have a strong sense of belonging to our school family. Through a range of learning activities and experiences both inside and outside the classroom our children learn to develop their confidence, self-belief and a can-do attitude to all aspects of their school lives. Our aim is that all of our pupils achieve more than they ever believed possible.

Our curriculum is planned around the needs of our children with our school vision and values at its heart; our children leave us understanding how to set high expectations for themselves, having a strong sense of community and with an understanding of life beyond school. Our vision and values underpin our RSHE curriculum planning so that the aims are met within the context of the Isbourne Valley School community.

Statutory Requirements

As a maintained primary school we must provide relationships and health education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#). We are not, however, required to provide sex education, but we do need 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 also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996;
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#); and

- 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.

RSHE is taught at Isbourne Valley School in accordance with this policy.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents and carers. The consultation and policy development process included:

- Review – the curriculum lead, Headteacher and link governor worked together to assimilate and consider all relevant information including the DfE guidance, training materials and articles and local guidance;
- Staff input – all teaching staff were given the opportunity to consider the new guidance, our draft curriculum overviews, our draft policy and proposed teaching resources;
- Parents and carers – parents and carers were invited to comment on and/or discuss the proposed changes;
- Pupils – we investigated (in an age appropriate manner) what pupils want from their RSE; and
- Ratification – once the above had taken place the final policy was shared with governors and ratified.

What is RSHE?

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

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

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Details of our curriculum are set out in Appendix 1 to this policy; it is important to note that we may need to adapt this, and do so, as and when necessary (e.g. to discuss issues affecting them). We will, wherever possible, inform parents and carers of any deviation in advance and are happy to share curriculum materials with parents and carers on request.

Our curriculum has been developed, structured and planned in line with the approach that we take to all aspects of our curriculum. It takes into account the age, needs and feelings of the children. If pupils ask questions beyond the scope of what is being taught or this policy, teachers and/or teaching support staff will respond in an appropriate manner so that children are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

Different aspects of the RSHE curriculum are taught within different subject areas (e.g. healthy eating in Science and D&T); much of it is taught in our RSHE (which includes what was previously called PHSE) curriculum itself and lessons themselves. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum. Other aspects are covered in religious education (RE) (e.g. learning about different faiths). Pupils also learn about aspects of British Values in our wider school life (e.g. School Council and House Captain systems, PATHS monitors and PALS).

All pupils will be supported with developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict – in conjunction with our restorative practice approach
- Using correct terms for body parts including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples
- Discussion and group work – some aspects of the curriculum in Upper Key Stage 2 will be taught in a mixed-gender session followed up with single-sex question time.

These skills and 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, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents or 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, young carers or kinship carers).

Across our school, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

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

Relationships:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful and kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

Health:

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

Primary sex education focuses on:

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

We use material appropriate to each year group 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.

Pupils may sometimes ask questions about topics which go beyond the sex education we cover or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. We believe that when dealing with any such questions, the emphasis must be on supporting the child; we recognise that if children have questions that go unanswered they might turn to inappropriate sources of information, including those online. We will react and respond to these instances on an individual basis. Our responses may include (but are not necessarily limited to) asking a pupil to speak to their parents or a trusted adult, signposting to support services where needed, or enlisting the support of an external body or agency. We will handle these circumstances in line with our safeguarding policy and procedures and will, as appropriate, discuss the situation with parents and carers.

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

All teaching and materials will be appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

We value the views of parents and carers. We share details of what will be taught on our curriculum overviews. Parents and carers are invited and encouraged to contact their child's class teacher if they have questions or concerns or would like further details. If they would like further support, they are encouraged to contact the RSHE lead teacher or head teacher.

We use the Kapow Primary scheme and resources as a progressive curriculum designed to meet the DfE requirements for the end of primary school (see Appendix 2). This is supplemented by further resources and lessons from providers such as the GHLL, NSPCC, Virgin Money, NFER First aid etc. to make our provision bespoke to the needs of children at Isbourne Valley School.

We use the Kapow Primary scheme and resources together with lessons, resources and activities from other providers such as the GHLL, NSPCC, Virgin Money, NFER First Aid. Our curriculum covers the DfE requirements for the end of primary school (see Appendix 2) in a progressive way suited and adapted to the needs of our pupils on an ongoing basis.

Parents of all pupils will be written to, by the Headteacher, to remind them of RSE lessons and their content before the lessons are taught.

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 and maturity of the 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
- Are unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

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

Use of external organisations and materials

We may work with external agencies and, if doing so, we will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE 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 (i.e. the NSPCC Speak Out, Stay Safe programme), 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 any materials that the agency may use in advance
- 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
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers
- 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
- Work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for making sure that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group;
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE;
- Monitoring progress;
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils; and
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] 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. Key staff responsible for RSHE are:

Headteacher – Justin Godding

Governors -Teaching & Learning Committee

Link Governor – Rachel Bale

RSHE Subject Co-ordinator – Elizabeth Rogers

Science Subject Co-ordinator – Adele Pangbourne

Pupils

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

The Governing Body

The governing body has delegated the implementation of this policy to the Headteacher and will hold the Headteacher to account for so doing. The governing body has delegated the approval of this policy to the Teaching & Learning Committee.

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents and carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships and health education. Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE 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 RSHE.

Adopted by Isbourne Valley School Governing Body on 9th September 2026

Next review Summer term 2028

Appendix 1

RSE Curriculum Overview

The current RSE Curriculum overview is annexed.



This document summarises the expectations set by the Department for Education (DfE) for what pupils should know by the end of primary school. These expectations are set out in the DfE's [guidance](#) on pages 8 to 10.

Families and people who care for me

- That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can give love, security and stability
- The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as 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 the families of other children, 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, are at the heart of safe and happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up
- That marriage and civil partnerships represent 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
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships
- That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it
- The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened
- How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right
- How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed

Respectful, kind relationships

- How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated
- The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults
- How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration
- Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs

- That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (e.g. physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs
- Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships
- The conventions of courtesy and manners
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests
- The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help
- What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype
- How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust

Online safety and awareness

- That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure
- How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this
- That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults
- The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online
- Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up
- That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online

Being safe

- What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.
- About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults (including that it's 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), including those they do and do not know
- How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust
- How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so
- How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

General wellbeing

- The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation
- The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health
- The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition
- How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings
- How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support
- That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others
- That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently
- Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online)
- That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help

Wellbeing online

- That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet
- Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection
- The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing
- How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online
- Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted
- The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive
- How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them
- That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults
- How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted
- That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent
- Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

Physical health and fitness

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
- The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity
- How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health

Healthy eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content)

- Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health)

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches

Health protection and prevention

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular checkups at the dentist
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing
- The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils

Personal safety

- About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks
- How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code

Basic first aid

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them
- Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries

Developing bodies

- About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
- The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts
- The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress