

Relationships, Health and Sex Education (Life Skills)

Published: Spring 2025
Review Date: Spring 2026
Committee Responsible: Learning & Welfare

Contents

1. Statutory requirements	1
2. Policy development.....	1
3. Definition.....	1
4. Curriculum	2
5. Sex Education.....	3
6. Delivery of RHSE.....	3
6. Roles and responsibilities.....	4
7. Parents' right to withdraw	5
9. Training.....	5
10. Monitoring arrangements.....	5
Appendix 1: Statutory Relationships Education content for Primary age children	6
Appendix 2: Statutory Health Education content for Primary age children	8
Appendix 3: Long Term Plan for RHSE.....	10

1. Statutory requirements

As a maintained primary school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work Act 2017. We must also teach Health Education, which includes Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing. The Department of Education (DfE) encourages schools to deliver Sex Education that ensures both boys and girls are prepared for the changes adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the National Curriculum for science – how a baby is conceived and born.

2. Policy development

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

1. Review – a member of staff collated 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 and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy.
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated pupil expectations of RHSE.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

3. Definition

RHSE (Life Skills) concerns the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, physical health, changes to bodies in puberty, mental wellbeing, diversity and personal identity. RHSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values. This promotes positive behaviour, good mental health and wellbeing, resilience and achievement, helping children to stay safe online, develop healthy and safe relationships, making sense of media messages, challenging extreme views and having the skills and attributes to negotiate and assert themselves now and in the future.

4. Curriculum

The school's Life Skills curriculum includes all elements of Relationship, Health and Sex Education, which includes Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing.

The school's RHSE provision supports the school's aims of developing confident citizens and successful learners who are creative, resourceful and able to identify and solve problems. The social and emotional development of pupils is embedded throughout the entire school's curriculum and culture. The school has a powerful combination of a planned thematic RHSE program, built around a spiral curriculum of recurring themes, designed to:

1. Give pupils the knowledge and develop the self-esteem, confidence and self-awareness to make informed choices and decisions;
2. Encourage and support the development of social skills and social awareness;
3. Enable pupils to make sense of their own personal and social experiences;
4. Promote responsible attitudes towards the maintenance of good physical and mental health, supported by a safe and healthy lifestyle;
5. Enable effective interpersonal relationships and develop a caring attitude towards others;
6. Encourage a caring attitude towards and responsibility for the environment;
7. Help our pupils understand and manage their feelings, build resilience and be independent, curious problem solvers;
8. Understand how society works and the laws, rights and responsibilities involved.

We know there is a proven link between pupils' health and wellbeing, and their academic progress. Crucial skills and positive attitudes developed through comprehensive Personal, Social, Health and Economic education are critical to ensuring children are effective learners.

At St James C of E Primary School we follow the Coram SCARF Units of work, which are planned around the following themes: Me and My Relationships; Valuing Difference; Keeping Myself Safe; Rights and Responsibilities; Being My Best and Growing and Changing. These topics are covered annually through a developmentally progressive, spiralling curriculum. See Appendix 3 for an overview of SCARF.

The main topics in Relationships education are:

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

Within Health Education, the children will participate in learning activities linked to these specialist areas:

- Physical Health and Fitness
- Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco
- Economic Wellbeing and Financial Capability
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Safety Education
- Internet Safety and Harms
- Healthy Eating
- Health and Prevention
- Basic First Aid (taught in each year group from Year 1-6, with an increased emphasis in KS2)
- Menstruation
- Challenging Homophobia and Stereotyping

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, RHSE education is about making connections; it's strongly linked to child-led activities, including play. RHSE is taught through activities that are part of topics, as well as on an individual basis to develop personal skills such as dressing, feeding and toileting. Positive experiences are built through daily opportunities, to share and enjoy a range of different activities. Children are given the opportunity to engage in social activities, as members of a small group or occasionally during whole-school activities.

We have chosen SCARF as our RHSE resource because the lessons build upon children's prior learning; we have assessed the content and feel that it is relevant and sensitive to the needs of the children. There is planned progression across the SCARF scheme of work, so that children are increasingly and appropriately challenged as they move up through the school. Assessment is completed by the class teacher using the SCARF Summative Assessment 'I can...' statements, alongside the lesson plan learning outcomes to demonstrate progression of both skills and knowledge.

5. Sex Education

It is important that the transition phase before moving to secondary school supports pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively. Through our progressive science curriculum from Year R to Year 6, pupils learn the scientific names and then functions of parts of the body, that animals including humans reproduce and the process of change as we grow from babies to adults, including the changes of puberty.

The DfE recommends that all primary schools should have a Sex Education programme, tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils. We therefore provide supplementary units in Years 4, 5 and 6 drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the National Curriculum for science. This can also be viewed on the Science Curriculum Overview on our school website.

Our Primary Sex Education will focus on:

Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings (Year 4 and 5)

How a baby is conceived and born (Year 6)

This information builds on content they have previously learnt in the programme about relationships, puberty changes and reproduction; it lays the foundations for their ongoing Relationships and Sex Education in their secondary phase. For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 3.

6. Delivery of RHSE

RHSE will be taught within the Life Skills programme in Key Stage 1 and 2 and within the Physical Development element of the EYFS curriculum. Life Skills takes a whole school approach and is proactively led to prioritise and address mental health and wellbeing. As a subject, it helps to embed the school aims, our core school values of Love, Respect, Unity and Courage, the SMSC (Social, Morale, Spiritual and Cultural curriculum), Behaviour policy and Safeguarding principles.

Life Skills is timetabled and discretely taught by the class teacher on a weekly basis. It is also supported by circle time; pastoral care and guidance; specialised assemblies; visiting speakers and whole school events. It is also taught through cross-curricular opportunities, for example biological aspects of RHSE are also taught within the science curriculum; E-safety within Computing; Physical Health within PE and Healthy Eating within Design Technology. English texts may also be used to develop discussion on a particular objective and some moral aspects are taught within RE.

A range of teaching methods, which involve pupils' full participation, are used to teach RHSE. These include use of small group work, discussion, case studies, drama and roleplay. Ground rules and distancing techniques are used to establish a safe environment to facilitate discussion and pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning.

RHSE is usually delivered in mixed gender groups. However, there may be occasions, in Years 4-6, during the Sex Education elements, when single gender groups are more appropriate and relevant.

Within lessons, questions asked by pupils will be answered in a way that is appropriate to their age, maturity, understanding and need. Correct vocabulary for terms, including body parts, will be used during Life Skills lessons in Reception to Year 6.

There is a particular focus on Sex Education in Years 5 and 6 in the Spring Term, when the School Nurse visits. This is then reinforced during Life Skills lessons in the Summer Term in the topic Changing and Growing.

In addition to the taught Life Skills curriculum, we provide enrichment activities to support the curriculum such as a Feeling Good Week, Anti-Bullying Week, International Week and Safer Internet Day.

RHSE will be delivered by the class teacher. Where appropriate, we may involve other visitors and professionals in the delivery of RHSE, such as the NSPCC and the School Nurse. When this happens, all visitors will be given a copy of this policy and will be expected to work within the values framework described

within. The Life Skills coordinator will ensure that the visitors' contributions to lessons are in line with the learning outcomes of the school's RHSE programme and a teacher will be present during the lesson.

Parents will be informed when the Sex Education element of RHSE will be taught to Years 4, 5 and 6 so they can prepare for any questions their child may have. They will also be invited to watch any videos that the children are to be shown before the sessions.

It is not our school's policy to withdraw pupils with special educational needs from RHSE education to catch up on other national curriculum subjects: these aspects of personal and social development are as important to all pupils as their academic achievement, and contribute to it. Lesson plan content will be adapted and extra support provided where necessary to ensure all pupils are enabled to develop key skills, attributes and knowledge developed through the RHSE education programme. Work in RHSE takes into account the targets set for individual children in their Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

SCARF lesson plans are flexible and allow for teachers, who are skilled in adapting curriculum content to meet the needs of the children in their class, to adjust their content in order to meet the learning outcomes.

Our school ensures that the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) elements of the RHSE education programme are relevant to all pupils; whatever their gender identity. All pupils learn together about all the changes that someone may experience as they go through puberty to help develop empathy and understanding and to reduce incidences of teasing or stigma. This will also ensure any child that identifies as transgender will have access to RSE that is relevant to the puberty they are likely to experience.

Our school acknowledges different ethnic, religious and cultural attitudes, as well as recognising that pupils may come from a variety of family situations and home backgrounds. These different families are acknowledged through our teaching and the use of resources that promote diversity and inclusion in Relationships Education.

Research shows that, on average, about 4% of pupils will go on to define themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual or pansexual (GLBP). It is possible that some pupils will also have GLBP parents/carers, brothers or sisters, other family members and/or friends. Our RHSE education acknowledges this through scenarios, in a sensitive, honest and balanced consideration of sexuality. This helps create a safe environment for all pupils and staff. The public sector equality duty, created under the Equality Act, requires schools and other public authorities to eliminate discrimination and to advance equality in its everyday business, in the design of its policies and curriculum. Schools have a legal responsibility for eliminating discrimination; to do this, schools are required to raise pupils' awareness of diversity and promote respectful relationships with those who are different from them.

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board will approve the RHSE policy, and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

6.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-science components of RHSE (see section 8).

6.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

Delivering RHSE (Life Skills) in a sensitive way

Modelling positive attitudes to RHSE

Monitoring progress

Responding to the needs of individual pupils

Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science components of RHSE

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

6.4 Pupils

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

7. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the non-statutory Sex Education our school teaches (how babies are conceived) but not Relationships Education. They do not have a right to withdraw their children from those aspects of Sex Education that are taught in the statutory National Curriculum Science and Health Education. Parents are invited to view our resources and discuss any concerns with our staff.

Before granting a request to withdraw a child/ren, the Headteacher will invite the parent to discuss the request with them to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The Headteacher will discuss with the parent the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on their child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parent proposes to deliver Sex Education to their child at home instead). The school is responsible for ensuring that should a child be withdrawn, they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and Sex Education. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about our school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum.

It is statutory for our school to show parents examples of the resources we plan to use. We will provide opportunities for parents to view examples through class/year group meetings either face to face or virtually. Ongoing communication with parents about what is planned to be taught and when, will be provided through termly letters home. We advise parents to view the resources in order to support them in carrying out their responsibilities relating to providing RSE at home. It is valuable for a child's development to learn about their own family's values in regards to relationships and sex alongside the information they receive at school.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RHSE 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, to provide support and training to staff teaching RHSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The RHSE programme will be monitored by the Life Skills coordinator through the use of observation, planning, work sampling, learning walks, and discussions with teaching staff and pupils to ensure consistent and coherent provision. Children's progress and attainment will be monitored through formative and summative ongoing assessment in science units. Achievement in other aspects of RHSE will be monitored through other methods such as self-assessment, observation in class, class discussions, drawing and writing activities.

Appendix 1: Statutory Relationships Education content for Primary age children

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

Appendix 2: Statutory Health Education content for Primary age children

Mental wellbeing

Pupils should know:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom 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)
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough

Internet safety and harms

Pupils should know:

- that for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits
- about the benefits of rationing 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 effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
- why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
- that the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health
- how to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted
- where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

Physical health and fitness

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
- the importance of building regular exercise 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, vigorous exercise
- 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

Pupils should know:

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

Pupils should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking

Health and prevention

Pupils should know:

- 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 good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups 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 science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination

Basic first aid

Pupils should know:

- how to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary
- concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries

Changing adolescent body

Pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes
- about menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

Appendix 3: Long Term Plan for RHSE

RHSE and wellbeing long-term plan based on SCARF half-termly units and related key themes

(Units include lesson plans that cover all the DfE statutory requirements for Relationships Education and Health Education)

Year/Half-termly unit titles	1 Me and my Relationships	2 Valuing Difference	3 Keeping Safe	4 Rights and Respect	5 Being my Best	6 Growing and Changing
EYFS	What makes me special People close to me Getting help	Similarities and difference Celebrating difference Showing kindness	Keeping my body safe Safe secrets and touches People who help to keep us safe	Looking after things: friends, environment, money	Keeping my body healthy – food, exercise, sleep Growth Mindset	Cycles Life stages Girls and boys – similarities and difference
Y1	Feelings Getting help Classroom rules Special people Being a good friend	Recognising, valuing and celebrating difference Developing respect and accepting others Bullying and getting help	How our feelings can keep us safe – including online safety Safe and unsafe touches Medicine safety Sleep	Taking care of things: Myself My money My environment	Growth Mindset Healthy eating Hygiene and health Cooperation	Getting help Becoming independent My body parts Taking care of self and others
Y2	Bullying and teasing Our school rules about bullying Being a good friend Feelings/self-regulation	Being kind and helping others Celebrating difference People who help us Listening skills	Safe and unsafe secrets Appropriate touch Medicine safety	Cooperation Self-regulation Online safety Looking after money – saving and spending	Growth Mindset Looking after my body Hygiene and health Exercise and sleep	Life cycles Dealing with loss Being supportive Growing and changing Privacy
Y3	Rules and their purpose Cooperation Friendship (including respectful relationships) Coping with loss	Recognising and respecting diversity Being respectful and tolerant My community	Managing risk Decision-making skills Drugs and their risks Staying safe online	Skills we need to develop as we grow up Helping and being helped Looking after the environment Managing money	Keeping myself healthy and well Celebrating and developing my skills Developing empathy	Relationships Changing bodies and puberty Keeping safe Safe and unsafe secrets
Y4	Healthy relationships Listening to feelings Bullying Assertive skills	Recognising and celebrating difference (including religions and cultural difference) Understanding and challenging stereotypes	Managing risk Understanding the norms of drug use (cigarette and alcohol use) Influences Online safety	Making a difference (different ways of helping others or the environment) Media influence Decisions about spending money	Having choices and making decisions about my health Taking care of my environment My skills and interests	Body changes during puberty Managing difficult feelings Relationships including marriage
Y5	Feelings Friendship skills, including compromise Assertive skills Cooperation Recognising emotional needs	Recognising and celebrating difference, including religions and cultural Influence and pressure of social media	Managing risk, including online safety Norms around use of legal drugs (tobacco, alcohol) Decision-making skills	Rights, respect and duties relating to my health Making a difference Decisions about lending, borrowing and spending	Growing independence and taking ownership Keeping myself healthy Media awareness and safety My community	Managing difficult feelings Managing change How my feelings help keeping safe Getting help

Y6	Assertiveness Cooperation Safe/unsafe touches Positive relationships	Recognising and celebrating difference Recognising and reflecting on prejudice-based bullying Understanding bystander behaviour Gender stereotyping	Understanding emotional needs Staying safe online Drugs: norms and risks (including the law)	Understanding media bias, including social media Caring: communities and the environment Earning and saving money Understanding democracy	Aspirations and goal setting Managing risk Looking after my mental health	Coping with changes Keeping safe Body Image Sex Education Self-esteem
----	---	--	--	--	---	---