At Sherborne St John C of E Primary School, our policies are designed to ensure that every child can **achieve** their full potential, **enjoy** their learning, and be **inspired** by their experiences. This policy is underpinned by our core Christian values of **Trust, Truth and Forgiveness**, which enable us to build a secure, loving and thriving environment for our entire school community.

In line with our vision, this policy seeks to:

- **Foster Trust:** Building strong relationships with one another and exploring our relationship with God.
- **Uphold Truth:** Inspiring integrity and the courage to stand up for what is right.
- **Practice Forgiveness:** Creating an environment of patience and understanding where we take responsibility for our choices and move forward together when things go wrong.

Rooted in the Christian faith and the teachings of the Bible, our school remains a caring community where every individual is safe in the knowledge that they are loved and valued by God.

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Policy Development

This policy was developed in response to the changes in legislation and statutory requirements for the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education published in 2025. It is based on a model template provided by The Church of England Education Office and using guidance from the PSHE Association and Teaching Unions.

It was agreed by the Governing Body and will be reviewed in October 2027 and then every three years after that or when there is change in legislation or guidance.

Policy Statement

We undertake to follow the principles in the Church of England Charter for faith sensitive and inclusive relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education (RSHE): Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Heath Education (RSHE) in Church of England Schools. Our focus is on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults.

We believe that Relationships Education is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships. In our school, we believe that there is a need to teach age and developmentally appropriate sex education as part of our Relationships Education.

We believe that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led Relationships Education. We believe that through providing high quality Relationships Education, we are upholding the ethos and values of this school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference

We believe that Relationships Education is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. An inclusive Relationships Education at Sherborne St John CofE Primary School will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

We acknowledge that Relationships Education is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Note: 'LGBT' is used throughout this document because it is the term used in the DfE Guidance. In using this acronym, we intend to include the full spectrum of people who are not cisgender and heterosexual.

Relationships Education helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and how to get help if they are experiencing, or have experienced, abuse. It also helps pupils to understand their rights and what services are available to support their physical and mental health. This policy is therefore underpinned by our Safeguarding Policy and our Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Adapted from the model template provided by The Church of England Education Office April 2026 and using material from the NEU and the PSHE Association.

What is Relationships and Sex Education?
We define relationships education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. To cover the curriculum content in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive and respectful relationships on and offline (including keeping safe online: financial risks-scams/gambling and deepfakes/AI). We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- To cherish themselves and others as unique and wonderfully made
- To recognise what a healthy relationship looks like, to form healthy relationships, ensuring respect and dignity for themselves and others
- How to live well together, including behaving well towards others, disagreeing well, forgiving and repairing broken relationships
- How to keep themselves and others safe (including near roads, rail and water safety)
- How to make sense of the world around them, to develop the skills to express their own views and make their own informed decision
- explore a range of family structures, including LGBT families and other family structures
- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

We define sex education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health. We take the approach that Relationships and sex education are best approached in an integrated way. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other. Many aspects of sex education are complimented by our curriculum for science where children learn about the main external body parts and changes to the human body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty. Children are taught to use the correct biological naming for body parts (including genitalia).

What do we teach and when do we teach it?
We will use a mix of weekly teaching sessions and 'blocked' units of work to deliver our curriculum. Some topics and themes lead themselves to being taught each week, whilst others are best taught as a series of lessons close together over the course of a week.

Curriculum newsletters and communications from class teachers will be used to keep parents informed about what is being taught so that themes and ideas can be followed up at home.

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The table below outlines the broad themes and topics that are covered each term. We use a 'question-based' approach to our RSE Curriculum to encourage enquiry and independent thinking amongst our students. We use a scheme of work written by the PSHE association to inform our planning of RSE education. In this scheme of work the statutory guidance is comprehensively covered by learning opportunities for each key stage across the Programme's core themes: Me and my relationships, Valuing Difference, Keeping Myself Safe, Rights and Responsibilities, Being my Best and Growing and Changing. Teaching builds according to the age and needs of the pupils throughout the primary phase with suggested developmentally appropriate learning objectives given to respond to each key question.

Phase Key Questions and Topics Covered

EYFS In the Early Years PSHE, including relationships and sex education, is interwoven within the pupils' experience through daily EYFS play-based activities, role-play areas, quality children's fiction and reflective discussion to begin to build pupils' knowledge and understanding, skills, attitudes and attributes related to PSHE elements of education.

	Introductory lesson	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6
Year 1/2	Y1 Introduction: Setting ground rules for RSE & PSHE	Y1/2 (A): Families and relationships	Y1/2 (A): Health and wellbeing	Y1/2 (A): Safety and the changing body	Y1/2 (A): Citizenship	Y1/2 (A): Economic wellbeing	Y1/2 (A): Transition
Year 3/4	Introduction: Setting ground rules for RSE & PSHE lessons	Y3/4 (A): Families and relationships	Y3/4 (A): Health and wellbeing	Y3/4 (A): Safety and the changing body	Y3/4 (A): Citizenship	Y3/4 (A): Economic wellbeing	Y3/4 (A): Transition
Year 5/6	Introduction: Setting ground rules for RSE & PSHE lessons	Y5/6 (A): Families and relationships	Y5/6 (A): Health and wellbeing	Y5/6 (A): Safety and the changing body	Y5/6 (A): Citizenship	Y5/6 (A): Economic wellbeing	Y5/6 (A): Transition
	Introductory lesson	**Unit 1**	**Unit 2**	**Unit 3**	**Unit 4**	**Unit 5**	**Unit 6**
Year 1/2	Y2 Introduction: Setting ground rules for RSE & PSHE lessons	Y1/2 (B): Families and relationships	Y1/2 (B): Health and wellbeing	Y1/2 (B): Safety and the changing body	Y1/2 (B): Citizenship	Y1/2 (B): Economic wellbeing	Y1/2 (B): Transition
Year 3/4	Introduction: Setting ground rules for RSE & PSHE lessons	Y3/4 (B): Families and relationships	Y3/4 (B): Health and wellbeing	Y3/4 (B): Safety and the changing body	Y3/4 (B): Citizenship	Y3/4 (B): Economic wellbeing	Y3/4 (B): Transition
Year 5/6	Introduction: Setting ground rules for RSE & PSHE lessons	Y5/6 (B): Families and relationships	Y5/6 (B): Health and wellbeing	Y5/6 (B): Safety and the changing body	Y5/6 (B): Citizenship	Y5/6 (B): Economic wellbeing	Year 5/6 (B): Transition

More detailed information about each topic area will be shared prior to the unit being taught, including specific, biological terms relevant to it.

How do we support vulnerable learners?

We recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in Relationships Education due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in planned lessons.

How will we ensure our RSE provision is accessible for all learners, including those with SEND?

RSE Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important when planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities. High quality teaching that includes planning for individual needs will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

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How will we work with external agencies and visitors?

From time-to-time Sherborne St John CofE Primary may invite external experts and visitors to help us deliver our Relationships Education. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our Relationships Education by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school. External visitors may include the NSPCC, Emergency Services and health professionals. A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons so as to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have. Any external visitors will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy.

We will also ensure that:
● There is appropriate planning, preparation and follow up work for the session
● The visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics. They will also be made aware, anonymously, of issues relating to child protection that might have an impact on the teaching session.

How will we monitor and evaluate our provision?

Regular (at least annual) monitoring of provision that involves all teaching staff will focus on:
● the impact of our curriculum plans on outcomes for pupils
● the consistency of provision across key stages and year groups
The evaluations of our monitoring will be discussed with governors and improvements fed into development planning for the following year.
How do we assess and celebrate pupil achievements?

At Sherborne St John we take a student-centred approach to assessment. Students will be engaged in the assessment process through:
● goal setting
● sharing of learning journeys
● self, peer and teacher-led approaches to assessment
We will use a range of techniques and practises to understand student achievement which may include: project work, observations, reflective journals, student interviews, students' pre and post unit self-evaluations.

Communication of curriculum materials to parents

In accordance with the 2026 statutory requirements, transparency with parents is a key principle of our RSHE provision. We believe that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children and should be fully informed about the resources used to support their learning.

To ensure this partnership is effective:

- Parents are invited to view all RSHE curriculum materials, lesson plans, and resources upon request.
- These materials can be accessed by contacting the school office to arrange a viewing or by attending our scheduled parental consultation meetings.

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- We will also provide digital access to key curriculum overviews via our school website and regular curriculum newsletters to keep families updated on what is being taught in each year group.
- Furthermore, we ensure that all external providers and visitors comply with this transparency requirement, allowing parents to review any materials they bring into the classroom.

The right of withdrawal

Whilst parents have no right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, or from the elements of sex education that are taught within the Science curriculum, or from Health Education, they do have the right to excuse their child from Sex Education. However, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of sex education and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.
If a parent does not wish their child to be included in the Sex Education element of our RSE Curriculum we ask that they first speak to the Headteacher to discuss their concerns. Further to that meeting, if a parent still wishes to withdraw their child, the Headteacher must be informed in writing via the office at your child's school. We will automatically grant a parental request to withdraw their child from any sex education, other than as part of the Science or Health Education curriculum.

Changes to the scheduled curriculum

There may be times when a change to the written, scheduled curriculum will be appropriate. This may be necessitated by context and circumstance.
For example:
• a child in Y3 arrives new to the school with same sex parents
• parents of a child in Y4 express a wish for their child to present as a different gender.
These contexts would require the taught curriculum to reflect the context and reality of the class group; therefore, adjustments would need to be made to the planned curriculum. In this event, the school will contact the diocesan Education team for notification and advice.

Who will teach Relationships and Sex Education?

Teachers do not have right to withdraw from teaching RSE but headteachers may use their discretion to allow staff to withdraw based on context.

Supply teachers, student teachers or teachers on fixed term temporary contracts (eg: maternity cover) must be made aware of the school's RSE policy such that they know what topics are considered age-appropriate for the year group they are teaching. Extra consideration should be given if schools allow visiting or temporary teachers to teach RSE.

Relationships and Sex Education and Faith

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The DfE Guidance states (paragraphs 73-74): 'RSHE should be sensitive to the religious background of pupils, and schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics.'
'All schools may teach about faith perspectives. In particular, schools with a religious character may teach distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balance debate may take place about issues that are seen as contentious.'

For example: The delivery of RSE in our CofE schools should encompass the teachings of the Church of England, including the traditional Christian understanding of marriage as the context for sexual relationships and the importance of trust, loyalty, fidelity and choice, as well as the understanding of abstinence and celibacy as positive life choices. Schools should avoid giving the impression that there is a single position on such issues between Christian denominations or even within the Church of England.

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