Springfield Primary School

Relationships and Health Education

(PSHE / RHE) Policy

Updated to meet the DfE statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025), statutory from 1 September 2026.

Document control

Policy title	Relationships and Health Education (PSHE/RSHE) Policy
Applies to	Primary phase — EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
Policy type	Statutory
Produced by	For ratification ahead of implementation from 1 September 2026
Approved by	PSHE Lead in consultation with staff, governors, pupils and parents/carers
Date approved	Full Governing Board
Date of implementation	1 September 2026
Date of last review	March 2025
Next review date	September 2027
Link governor	Nicola Booker — Curriculum
Version	3.0

This policy should be read alongside the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality Policy, SEND Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Confidentiality Policy.

Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
1.0	April 2021	Original RSHE policy under 2019 statutory guidance.
2.0	March 2025	Annual review; minor curriculum updates.
3.0	July 2026	Full revision to meet the DfE 2025 statutory guidance, in force from 1 September 2026. New content on personal safety, change and loss, online financial harms, correct naming of body parts, and a stronger skills focus. Adoption of the seven guiding principles. Structure aligned to the PSHE Association policy-writing framework (2025).

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1. Definitions, rationale and ethos

1.1 Statutory requirements and non-statutory recommendations

This policy is written to meet the requirements of the DfE statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025), which becomes mandatory from 1 September 2026 and replaces the 2019 guidance. The statutory requirements mean that the school must teach Relationships Education and Health Education to all primary-aged pupils.

In addition to the statutory requirements, our school has chosen to not teach an age-appropriate programme of non-statutory sex education in Year 5 and/or Year 6, in line with the DfE's recommendation (see Sections 3 and 6).

What has changed for September 2026

- The DfE published updated statutory RSHE guidance in July 2025. It replaces the 2019 guidance and is statutory from 1 September 2026.
- All schools must have a reviewed, up-to-date written policy and an updated curriculum in place by that date.
- This policy adopts the seven new guiding principles and introduces new and strengthened content (Sections 3) — personal safety, change and loss, online financial harms, correct naming of body parts, and a stronger emphasis on skills as well as knowledge.
- Schools were permitted to follow the new guidance early; the 2019 guidance remained in force until 31 August 2026.

1.2 Defining relationships education and sex education

We define **relationships education** as learning about the building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds — families and the people who care for us, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online relationships, and being safe — including the knowledge, skills and attributes needed to form and maintain them.

We define **sex education** as learning about human reproduction beyond the content set out in the National Curriculum for science — for example how a baby is conceived and born. In the primary phase this is non-statutory, and parents and carers have the right to request withdrawal from it (see Section 6).

Health education covers physical health and mental wellbeing, including the changing adolescent body (puberty). It is statutory and there is no right of withdrawal.

1.3 Our rationale — why RHE matters for our pupils

We believe RHE is important for our pupils and our school because high-quality, age-appropriate teaching helps children stay safe and healthy, build positive relationships, understand and manage their feelings, and navigate the world — including the online world — with confidence and respect for themselves and others. RHE is also a vital part of our whole-school approach to safeguarding: accurate knowledge and the right vocabulary help children recognise when something is wrong and know how to seek help.

1.4 Our ethos and values

Springfield Primary's RHE provision is underpinned by our school's vision and values: respect, resilience, reflection and empathy. Our vision for safe and effective RHE is that every child develops the knowledge, skills and attributes to lead a safe, healthy and fulfilling life and to treat themselves and others with dignity and respect.

As we have adopted the UNICEF Rights of the Child this policy links to many of the articles in the convention including:

- **Article 2:** No discrimination: All children have all these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what language they speak, what their religion is, what they think, what they look like, if they are a boy or girl, if they have a disability, if they are rich or poor, and no matter who their parents or families are or what their parents or families believe or do. No child should be treated unfairly for any reason.
- **Article 5:** Family Guidance: Governments should let families and communities guide their children so that, as they grow up, they learn to use their rights in the best way. The more children grow, the less guidance they will need.
- **Article 12:** Respect for Child's views: Children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children seriously.
- Article 13 – Sharing thoughts freely: Children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think and feel, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms other people.
- **Article 17:** - Right to information: Children have the right to get information from the Internet, radio, television, newspapers, books and other sources. Adults should make sure the information they are getting is not harmful. Governments should encourage the media to share information from lots of different sources, in languages that all children can understand.
- **Article 29:** - Aims of Education: Children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.
- **Article 33** - Protection from Drugs: Governments must protect children from taking, making, carrying or selling harmful drugs.
- **Article 34** -Protection from Sexual abuse: The government should protect children from sexual exploitation (being taken advantage of) and sexual abuse, including by people forcing children to have sex for money, or making sexual pictures or films of them.

1.5 Intended outcomes

As a result of their RHE lessons, we intend that pupils will:

Know and understand

- That families and stable, caring relationships are at the heart of a happy life, and that families take many forms, all deserving respect.
- The features of healthy friendships and respectful relationships, online and offline.
- How to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy, and the correct vocabulary to describe their bodies and feelings.
- How to recognise risk and unsafe situations and where and how to get help.

Understand they have a right to

- Be safe, to be treated with respect, and to have their feelings and boundaries respected.
- Privacy, including over their own body, and to say no to unwanted contact.
- Ask questions and to expect honest, age-appropriate answers.

Understand they have a responsibility to

- Treat others with kindness, courtesy and respect, online and offline.
- Respect difference and challenge unkindness, bullying and stereotyping.
- Make safe and considerate choices and seek help for themselves and others.

Develop the skills of

- Communicating effectively, listening, and being assertive — expressing needs, feelings and boundaries.
- Managing difficult feelings such as disappointment, frustration and loneliness, and building resilience.
- Recognising and managing risk, including resisting pressure to share information or images online.

Develop the attributes of

- Self-respect, self-worth, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness and trustworthiness.

1.6 Inclusion and equality

We ensure RHE is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), by adapting teaching, resources and timing in partnership with the SENDCo, while maintaining high expectations for all. We ensure RHE fosters equality by meeting our duties under the Equality Act 2010, using inclusive language and resources, representing the diversity of families and communities, and actively challenging stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination. Content relating to biological sex and gender reassignment is taught factually and age-appropriately, avoiding language or activities that reinforce harmful stereotypes.

1.7 Policy development and consultation

This policy was produced by the PSHE lead on behalf of the governing body, through consultation with staff, governors, pupils and parents and carers. At least one representative of the governing body forms part of the working group that develops and reviews this policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

Responsibility for the RSE policy ultimately lies with the governing body.

The governing board

- Approves this policy, holds the headteacher to account for its implementation, and ensures statutory requirements are met from September 2026.
- Ensures the policy is published on the school website and available free of charge to parents and carers.

- Nominates a link governor and ensures at least one governor contributes to the working group that develops and reviews the policy.

The headteacher

- Has overall responsibility for implementation, for ensuring RHE is well led and resourced, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education.

The PSHE / RHE subject lead

- Leads curriculum design, sequencing, resourcing, assessment and review against the statutory guidance; the RHE programme is led by Miss Booker.
- Supports colleagues, organises CPD, and coordinates consultation with pupils and parents.

Teaching staff

- Deliver RHE — and support its delivery — in a sensitive, factual, age-appropriate and inclusive way, modelling positive relationships and respectful behaviour.
- Establish a safe learning environment and respond appropriately to disclosures in line with the Safeguarding Policy.
- Teachers cannot opt out of teaching RHE; staff with concerns should raise them with the subject lead or headteacher.

Staff training and professional development

Teaching staff receive RHE training to support safe and effective delivery. This includes training on safe and effective practice (creating a safe learning environment, ground rules, distancing and handling sensitive issues and disclosures) and on subject knowledge for new and strengthened content — for example correct naming of body parts, online financial harms, and change, loss and bereavement. Staff teaching RHE are supported by the subject lead, access to quality-assured resources, and opportunities to observe other teachers.

3. Curriculum design

3.1 The guiding principles that inform our curriculum

Our curriculum design is shaped by the seven guiding principles set out in the 2025 statutory guidance. **[NEW – September 2026]**

1. **Engagement with pupils.** Content reflects pupils' real lives, questions and concerns, informed by pupil voice.
2. **Engagement and transparency with parents.** We proactively consult parents and are open about content and materials.
3. **Positivity.** A positive, strengths-based approach that promotes healthy norms and avoids fear-based messaging.
4. **Careful sequencing.** Content is built progressively so learning is developmentally appropriate.
5. **Relevant and responsive.** The curriculum responds to our community's needs and to emerging issues.
6. **Skilled delivery of participative education.** Active, participative lessons delivered by confident, trained staff in a safe environment.

7. **A whole-school approach.** RHE is reinforced across the curriculum and the everyday culture and pastoral life of the school.

3.2 How RHE is embedded, planned and delivered

RHE is an integral part of our whole-school PSHE education provision. It is delivered primarily through timetabled PSHE lessons, supplemented by assemblies, circle time, themed days/weeks, the wider curriculum, pastoral team, use of external agencies and services and the everyday life of the school. We follow a scheme based on the PSHE Association Programme of Study to ensure coverage, progression and careful sequencing across EYFS, KS1 and KS2. Teaching is participative and interactive, using discussion, role-play, stories and scenarios.

3.3 Using data to inform priorities

We use a range of data to identify priorities and keep our programme relevant and responsive, including pupil voice and questionnaires, safeguarding and behaviour records, online-safety incidents, attendance and wellbeing information, and local data such as the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, local authority public-health data, or local police/community intelligence. Findings are used to adjust emphasis and sequencing each year.

3.4 Ensuring RHE is inclusive, age-appropriate and relevant

We ensure RHE is matched to the needs of our pupils through consultation and the use of data. We ensure an age-appropriate programme through careful sequencing and professional judgement about when and how to introduce content. We ensure an inclusive programme by adapting resources and delivery and representing the diversity of our community. Lessons are differentiated by adapted resources, scaffolding, pre-teaching of vocabulary, small-group or individual delivery to ensure all pupils, including those with SEND, can access and make progress in their learning.

3.5 Curriculum content

The tables below summarise the core content taught across the primary phase. Detailed, year-by-year coverage is in Appendix A. Items marked as new reflect additions or strengthened expectations introduced for September 2026.

Relationships Education

Strand	Core content covered across the primary phase
Families and people who care for me	That families are important and come in different forms; the characteristics of healthy family life; that others' families may look different and these differences should be respected.
Caring friendships	How friendships are made and maintained; managing conflict and repairing friendships; recognising when a friendship feels unsafe and how to seek help.
Respectful relationships	Respect, courtesy and good manners; equality and respect for difference; awareness of stereotypes (including gender stereotypes) and the harm they cause; self-respect and personal boundaries.

Strand	Core content covered across the primary phase
Online relationships	That people may behave differently online; the same principles of respect apply online; staying safe, keeping information private, recognising risk, reporting concerns, and critically evaluating online content.
Being safe	Appropriate and inappropriate contact; personal privacy and boundaries (including the correct names for body parts); the right to say no; recognising feeling unsafe and telling a trusted adult, and keeping on asking until heard.

Health Education

Strand	Core content covered across the primary phase
Mental wellbeing	That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life; vocabulary for feelings; how to seek support. **Strengthened: managing difficult feelings such as disappointment, frustration and loneliness; resilience and self-worth. [NEW]**
Internet safety and harms	Benefits and risks of being online; protecting personal data and privacy. **New: online financial harms (in-game spending, video-game monetisation, scams and fraud); reasons for age restrictions on content such as gambling and social media; the importance of settings such as location sharing. [NEW]**
Physical health and fitness	The benefits of an active lifestyle and risks of inactivity; how and when to seek support.
Healthy eating	What constitutes a healthy diet; planning and preparing healthy meals; risks of unhealthy eating.
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	Facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks. **New: vaping and nicotine addiction now included. [NEW]**
Health and prevention	Personal hygiene and germs; dental health; importance of sleep; sun safety; immunisation and vaccination.
Basic first aid	How to make a clear call to emergency services; basic first aid for common injuries.
The changing adolescent body (puberty)	Key facts about puberty and menstrual wellbeing, taught sensitively and in good time.
Personal safety	**New strand: recognising and reducing risk in everyday situations, including fire safety and travel safety — for example around water, roads and railways. [NEW]**
Change, loss and grief	**New: that change and loss, including bereavement, can cause a range of feelings; that everyone grieves differently; and where to find support. [NEW]**

Naming body parts, and the focus on skills

Within Health Education, pupils are taught the correct scientific names for the main parts of the body, including external genitalia, at an age-appropriate stage — established safeguarding best practice that helps children understand their bodies, reduces stigma and supports them to identify and report inappropriate contact. Across the curriculum there is a strengthened emphasis on skills and attributes alongside knowledge. **[NEW – September 2026]**

3.6 Sex education in the primary phase

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools. All pupils are taught the elements of human development and reproduction within the statutory National Curriculum for science, from which parents cannot withdraw their child.

Beyond this, Springfield Primary has decided that it **will not** deliver an additional, age-appropriate programme of sex education. Parents are told in advance what is statutory and what is additional, can view the materials, and may request withdrawal from the additional element (Section 6). **[NEW – September 2026]**

3.7 Cross-curricular links

Learning in RHE links to and complements other areas of the curriculum, including Science (the human body, life cycles and reproduction), Computing (online safety and digital literacy), Religious Education (beliefs, values, families and community), Citizenship/PSHE economic education (rights, responsibilities and financial choices) and Physical Education (physical health and wellbeing).

3.8 Assessment

Learning in RHE is assessed using approaches appropriate to the subject, such as baseline and end-point activities, to identify progress and inform planning. We assess pupils' learning, not their personal attitudes, beliefs or family circumstances. Assessment outcomes feed into evaluation of the programme (Section 8).

4. Safe and effective practice

High-quality, safe delivery underpins all RHE teaching. The following principles and protocols apply to all staff.

A safe learning environment and ground rules

- Teachers and pupils agree class ground rules at the start of RHE teaching and revisit them regularly, to create a respectful, non-judgemental environment.
- Distancing techniques — such as using characters, scenarios and the third person rather than asking pupils to disclose personal experiences — are used because they keep learning safe and reduce the risk of unintended disclosure or embarrassment.

Answering pupils' questions

- Staff answer questions honestly, sensitively and age-appropriately, using professional judgement about what is suitable for the whole class.
- Pupils can ask questions anonymously, for example via an “ask-it-basket” or question box, so that all questions can be addressed safely.
- If a pupil's question goes beyond the sex education the school covers, or relates to content from which a pupil has been withdrawn, the teacher will not answer it in class; our policy is to acknowledge the question, address it individually or signpost the pupil's parents/carers as appropriate, and record and report anything that raises a safeguarding concern.

Managing sensitive or controversial issues, and the staff protocol

- Potentially sensitive or controversial issues are handled factually and in a balanced way, within the school's values and the safe-learning-environment principles above.
- All staff follow the agreed staff protocol for teaching RHE (use of agreed ground rules, distancing, correct terminology, anonymous questions, and the procedure for questions beyond the taught curriculum) and are supported by the subject lead. See also the school's guidance on creating a safe learning environment and handling complex issues.

5. Openness and engagement with parents and other stakeholders

5.1 Working in partnership with parents and carers

- We work proactively in partnership with parents and carers, who are the first educators of their children, and consult them on the policy and curriculum content.
- Parents are informed about the RHE policy through the school website, newsletters, induction and information sessions, and the policy is available on the school website and free of charge on request.
- We notify parents when RHE — and in particular any sex education — is taught, by class times tables and the curriculum overview on the school website and a letter ahead of relevant units, so they can prepare and support conversations at home.
- To see the materials used to teach RSHE, parents can attend a parent information session, view materials on request from the office, or access a curriculum area on the website; we are committed to openness about the resources we use.
- We empower parents to follow up and support learning at home by providing summaries of what has been taught, suggested questions and conversation prompts, and signposting to trusted further resources.

5.2 Working in partnership with governors

- Governors contribute to the design, implementation and review of the RHE policy through the working group and are kept up to date through governor meetings.

5.3 Pupil voice

- We engage pupils in shaping RHE through questionnaires, Rights Respecting group, and pupil voice activities, and use their feedback to review and tailor the curriculum so it matches their needs.

6. Parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education

Element	Right to withdraw
Relationships Education	No right to withdraw.
Health Education (including puberty)	No right to withdraw.

Element	Right to withdraw
National Curriculum science (e.g. reproduction)	No right to withdraw.
Additional (non-statutory) sex education	Parents/carers may request that their child be withdrawn.

Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from the additional (non-statutory) sex education the school provides, but not from Relationships Education, Health Education (including puberty), or the biological content within the National Curriculum for science. If a parent/carer wishes to withdraw their child, they can contact the headteacher in writing using the form in Appendix B. It is our policy for the headteacher to meet with the parent to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and discuss any concerns before responding, and to record the request and outcome.

We will work with the parent to revisit the choice at appropriate intervals (for example as content changes year to year), so the decision continues to reflect the family's wishes and the pupil's needs. The school will ensure any pupil withdrawn receives purposeful alternative education during the relevant lessons.

7. Safeguarding

This policy supports our whole-school approach to safeguarding and is informed by other policies and by statutory guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education and our Safeguarding and Child Protection and Confidentiality policies.

- Teachers are aware that effective RHE can lead to a disclosure of a child-protection issue. Staff cannot promise confidentiality and will consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead and follow safeguarding procedures whenever a concern arises.
- Pupils who may have particular vulnerabilities or be considered 'at risk' (for example pupils with SEND, looked-after children, or those with relevant histories) are supported through tailored planning, awareness of triggers, and close liaison between the class teacher, DSL and SENDCo, so that teaching is safe and sensitive for them.
- The protocol for inviting visitors or external agencies into lessons requires prior agreement of content, quality-assurance of materials, appropriate vetting, and a briefing on the school's RHE approach, confidentiality and safeguarding protocols. Visitors are used to enrich, not replace, planned teaching.
- If a visitor or external agency receives a disclosure from a pupil, they must pass it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, in line with the school's safeguarding procedures, and must not promise confidentiality.

8. Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

- The school's RHE provision is monitored and evaluated by the PSHE/RSHE subject lead and senior leaders through planning scrutiny, learning walks, work sampling, and pupil and parent voice.
- Provision is reported on to the headteacher and the governing body (via the link governor and relevant committee), so governors can fulfil their oversight role.

- Assessment of pupils' learning contributes to evaluation of the programme's impact and informs future planning.
- The contribution of visitors and external agencies is monitored and evaluated through teacher observation, pupil feedback and review against the lesson's intended outcomes, to ensure it remains high-quality and consistent with this policy.
- Pupil voice is influential in adapting and amending planned learning, ensuring the curriculum stays relevant and responsive.

9. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least every 18–24 months — and sooner if statutory guidance changes — to ensure it continues to meet the needs of pupils, staff and parents and reflects current DfE guidance. As a matter of good practice we review it annually. The outcomes of consultation with staff, governors, pupils and parents feed into each review.

This policy will be reviewed on: July 2027.

10. Statutory framework and related guidance

This policy reflects, and should be read in conjunction with:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education — statutory guidance, DfE (2025), statutory from 1 September 2026.
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Education Act 1996 and Education Act 2002.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, current edition).

Appendix A — Long-term plan and progression



Primary PSHE education | Long-term overview

Statutory RSHE | Statutory RSHE | Economic Wellbeing & Careers | Economic Wellbeing & Careers

Early years foundation stage: For guidance and resources to support foundational learning before key stage 1, see our growing range of EYFS materials.

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	Making friends: playing and learning together	Mental health and wellbeing	Celebrating me, you and our families	Safety at home	Being healthy	Showing kindness to ourselves and others
Year 2	Mental health and wellbeing	Keeping safe online	Me, my body and staying safe	Money and work	Safety outside the home	Looking back and moving on
Year 3	Me, my friends and belonging	Mental health and wellbeing	Building healthy habits	Making choices online	Keeping safe out and about	Looking out for each other
Year 4	Mental health and wellbeing	Exploring ways to manage risk	Forming respectful relationships	Money matters and news literacy	Me, my body and growing up	Families and growing together
Year 5	Friendships, stereotypes and bullying	Mental health and wellbeing	Positively engaging with our world	Respecting boundaries	Safe connections online	Embedding healthy habits and learning first aid
Year 6	Mental health and wellbeing	Managing money and online spending	Changes in puberty *(and sex education)*	Drug education: assessing risk and managing influences	Developing our AI literacy	Looking to the future

Appendix B — Request to withdraw from additional (non-statutory) sex education

To be completed by the parent/carer and returned to the headteacher. Note: there is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education, Health Education (including puberty), or the National Curriculum science content.

Pupil's name	
Class / year group	
Parent/carer name	
Reason for withdrawal request (optional)	
Signature	
Date	

School use only

Date discussion held with parent/carer	
Agreed outcome	
Alternative provision arranged	
Date to revisit the decision	
Headteacher signature / date	