

Askwith Primary School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy



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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a safe, inclusive space where sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach correct scientific vocabulary
- Equip pupils to navigate on- and offline relationships safely
- Develop emotional regulation, resilience and empathy
- Promote respect, diversity and understanding of protected characteristics
- Support safeguarding through teaching consent, boundaries and safety

2. Statutory requirements

At Askwith Primary School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

As a primary academy school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

Relationships Education and Health Education compulsory for all pupils. We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum

including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

RSE at Askwith is:

- Compliant with 2026 statutory RSHE guidance (in force 1 Sept 2026).
- Delivered under Section 80A Education Act 2002 and Section 403 Education Act 1996.

3. Policy development

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

1. Review of all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance (DFE 2026 statutory RSHE 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 are consulted on this policy
4. Ratification - once amendments are made, the policy is shared with governors and ratified

A review of the current statutory guidance for RSHE was undertaken in 2025 and a draft Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance document was published in July 2025. The new Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education will be introduced on 1st September 2026.

Differences	How does this affect primary schools in September 2026?	Previous version (to be used until July 2026)
1. Stronger Expectations on Teaching About Family Diversity (including same-sex parents)	• Primary schools are now strongly encouraged to teach about same-sex parents as part of learning about different families. • This goes further than before by making representation of LGBT families an explicit expectation rather than optional.	• Primaries had discretion over LGBT content; teaching about same sex parents was optional. • Guidance only required pupils to respect differences.
2. Major Expansion of Online Safety Content	The new guidance reflects modern online risks that even younger children encounter. • Online misogyny, harmful ideologies and incel-linked behaviours. • Awareness of deepfakes, fake profiles, scams, monetised gaming, fraud. • Critical thinking about online content, privacy, personal data, and online influence. • Greater emphasis on risks of online contact,	• Covered 'online friendships' and general e-safety but did not reference: ➢ Deepfakes ➢ AI-generated content ➢ Misogynistic online cultures ➢ Online manipulation, financial harms or scams ➢ Modern social-media risks for younger

	including manipulative or predatory behaviours.	children
3. Expanded Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing Curriculum	- Children must learn emotional regulation skills, coping strategies and resilience. - New requirement to teach about change, loss and bereavement, including normal and diverse emotional responses. - Explicit teaching that feeling sad or worried is normal and not necessarily a mental health condition.	- Mental health was included but not in this level of detail. - Regulation strategies, bereavement education and 'normalising emotions' were <i>not explicitly required</i>.
4. Personal Safety Curriculum Expanded	- Primary children must now be taught practical safety in: ➤ Water safety ➤ Road safety ➤ Rail safety ➤ Fire safety ➤ Travel safety This is part of the Health Education entitlement.	- Safety focused mainly on physical boundaries, consent, and abuse recognition. - Environmental/real-world safety content was <i>not clearly specified</i>.
5. Sexual Harassment & Harmful Behaviours – Taught in Primary Through Safeguarding Lens	- Although explicit sexual content remains secondary-level, the new guidance includes early safeguarding education for primaries around: ➤ Recognising early forms of harassment ➤ Knowing what is unacceptable ➤ How to report concerns	These concepts existed only in broad safeguarding statements, without examples or explicit requirements.
6. Clearer Requirements for Parental Transparency	- Schools must provide parents with access to all RSHE materials upon request. - Schools must not use external providers that restrict sharing of materials (copyright-protected videos, paid logins, etc.).	Policies encouraged transparency but did not prohibit using resources that couldn't legally be shared with parents.
7. No Age Limits (Reversal of 2023 Draft Proposal)	The idea of fixed age thresholds for sensitive content was removed. Schools again have professional judgement to determine timing and age/stage appropriateness.	- Clear age limits for the teaching of the most sensitive content (2023 guidance) - Flexible, age-appropriate judgement (2019 guidance)
8. Strengthened Expectations Around Equality & Protected Characteristics	- Pupils must learn the facts and law regarding biological sex and gender reassignment as protected characteristics. - Primary teaching remains factual and safeguarding orientated, but the guidance clarifies what must be taught legally.	Equality Act protections were referenced but less explicitly tied into curriculum content.
9. More Explicit Requirements for	Schools must engage pupils in shaping RSHE and understanding their lived experiences (a key	Encouraged but not defined as a curriculum development

Pupil Voice in Curriculum Design	"guiding principle").	requirement.
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4. Definition

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

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Primary sex education will focus on:

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

In line with the 2026 RSHE statutory guidance, pupils will also receive explicit teaching in water safety, road safety, rail safety, fire safety and travel safety within the Health Education curriculum.

For more information about our curriculum, see Appendix 1 or request a copy of our PSHE progression document

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum.

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained members of staff (Lisa Longford).

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

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

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, 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 or young carers).

The delivery of RSHE will comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (s.149). Topics will be taught in a way which does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment. Pupils will be encouraged to understand the importance of equality and respect for all.

6.1 Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

RSHE teaching will be adapted to ensure that all areas are accessible for pupils with SEND thus preparing them for adulthood, as set out in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Careful adaptations will be made after consulting with parents/carers.

We are aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. We recognise that RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

6.2 Responding to difficult questions

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons, ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time or referred to the individual's parent/carer.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 The governing body

The local governing body will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

7.2 The headteacher

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

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE

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

RSE will be taught by teachers across all year groups as part of the planned PSHE curriculum. Sex education will be taught by Lisa Longford.

7.4 Pupils

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

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

Teachers will be

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by SLT through:

- book scrutiny
- drop-ins
- pupil discussions
- lesson observations

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by SLT annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by local governing body.

11. Safeguarding

RSHE discussions can lead to increased safeguarding concerns being raised by pupils. All staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if they have concerns about pupil wellbeing or safety.

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Relationships and sex education curriculum map

YEAR GROUP	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE	POSSIBLE RESOURCES
Reception	Relationships: • Know who is special and why • know that we can be part of a community Growing and Changing: • Know babies grow into adults	
Year 1 and 2	Relationships (Y1): • Know about different families • Know how to respond appropriately to others • Know that there can be groups within a community Relationships (Y2): • Know features of a positive family life • Know that our feelings are cared for in different ways by different people • Know how to contribute within a community Growing and Changing (Y1): • Know the life cycle of a human Growing and Changing (Y2): • Know animals have offspring which grow into adults	NSPCC – The underwear rule resources (PANTS) PSHE Association – Inclusion, belonging and addressing extremism, (KS1), ‘Sameness and difference’

YEAR GROUP	ESSENTIAL KNOWLEDGE	POSSIBLE RESOURCES
Year 3 and 4	Relationships (Y3): • Know if relationships make you feel happy or unhappy • Know strategies to support feelings/good mental health • Know that people can be similar and different within a community Relationships (Y4): • Know the difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships (including online) • Know feelings change over time • Know about the positives of diversity within a community	NSPCC Share Aware Teach computing E -Safety
Year 5 and 6	Relationships(Y5): • Know different types of relationships • Know how to identify early signs of poor mental health and how this affects relationships • Know what is meant by stereotypes Relationships(Y6): • Know about arrange and forced marriage • Know strategies to deal with changing emotions • Know strategies to challenge stereotypes Growing and Changing (Y5): • Physical and emotional changes in puberty Growing and Changing (Y6): • Describe how some animals reproduce • Human reproduction – sex education	NSPCC Share Aware Betty North Yorkshire Education Services training materials – Clare Barrowman www.rshp.scot https://bettyeducation.com/ https://vimeo.com/user/96707063/folder/729017 healthyschoolsnorthyorks.org/pshe-resources https://vimeo.com/user/96707063/folder/729017 www.rshp.scot https://bettyeducation.com/

Appendix 2: By the end of primary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care for me	• That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide 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. • 7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful 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 (for example, 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. • 11.How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online relationships	• 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. • 6. 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	1. 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. 2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. 3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact. 4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know. 5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust. 6. 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. • 7. 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.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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. 6. 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.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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 and tobacco	• 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 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. • 2. 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.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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.

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	