The Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

SLT Lead & Reviewed By: Assistant Headteacher

Governor Committee Approval: AQT Committee

Approved on: 5th November 2026

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The school's vision

Jesus said: "I have come that they may have life, life in all its fullness." This serves as the cornerstone of our school community. By fostering a culture of positive learning experiences rooted in core Christian values, we aim to equip our students for a life of resilience, fulfilment, and meaningful contribution to society.
This policy supports our school vision and ethos.

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1.Related Items

School policies & procedures:

- Curriculum Policy
- Skills 4 Life (PSHE) Policy
- Skills for life Schemes of work
- Science Schemes of Work
- Religious Studies Schemes of work
- Drop in Clinic Terms of Reference
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policies
- SEND and Equality policies
- Online Safety and Filtering/Monitoring

2.Vision and Values

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) supports Jesus' vision for "life in all its fullness" by helping students build healthy, respectful relationships that enrich their lives. RSE teaches students about love, kindness, and empathy, fostering a foundation for positive relationships with others, rooted in mutual respect and understanding. Through this education, students learn how to make informed, responsible choices about their health and well-being, in line with the Christian value of treating oneself and others with dignity. By understanding consent, setting boundaries, and recognising healthy relationships, students are empowered to care for themselves and others in ways that promote wholeness and self-respect.

RSE supports students' emotional and mental well-being, encouraging a strong sense of self-worth, inclusivity, and resilience. Jesus taught love and compassion for all. RSE builds on this by helping students embrace diversity, respect each other's differences, and act with integrity. Through developing these values and virtues, students are better equipped to live fulfilling, purposeful lives as part of a caring and inclusive community. In this way, RSE prepares students to contribute positively to society and realise their potential, supporting a life rich in faith, love, and compassion as envisioned by Jesus.

RSE helps to create a safe space for open, respectful conversations on sensitive topics. We help students understand the changes of puberty, learn about sexual development, and recognise the importance of health and hygiene. RSE also fosters self-respect, confidence, and empathy, building a positive culture around sexuality and relationships. By teaching students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies, we empower them to communicate clearly and feel secure in their identity. In this way, RSE supports each student's growth and aligns with our Christian values.

3.Statutory requirements

The school provides statutory relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, and the revised Department for Education statutory guidance in effect from 1 September 2026.

The school and governing body have regard to the revised Department for Education statutory guidance issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996, and fulfil applicable duties under sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996.

The school fulfils its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty, and works to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act.
b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.
The relevant protected characteristics for the purposes of (b) and (c) are sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment and age, as applicable to the relevant parts of the Equality Act 2010.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) requires schools to ensure children have the right to education that helps them make informed decisions about their health, relationships, and safety. It emphasises children's rights to access information, be heard in decisions about their education, and receive teaching that fosters respect, healthy relationships, and personal well-being.

This curriculum area covers broad areas of relevance and concern to children and young people today. It ensures that every student is guaranteed a PSHE education that covers mental health and wellbeing; physical health (including healthy lifestyles and first aid); learning about safe, healthy relationships and sex (including understanding consent, negotiating life online, intimate relationships).

'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). http://www.churchofengland.org/education

The Church of England believes that it is important to value and to protect all God's children and this informs our approach to Sex and Relationship education. We believe that good quality Sex and Relationship education which treats all with dignity and respect, is an entitlement of every child.

All maintained schools providing secondary education:

- Must provide sex education (including education about HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases).
- Should teach human growth and reproduction as set out in the statutory National Curriculum for science
- Should ensure RSE is embedded in Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education to ensure that students consider the moral aspects of sex education and are encouraged to develop loving and caring relationships. (*Governors Guide to the Law*)

The PSHE Association resources and the revised 2026 DfE statutory RSHE guidance inform curriculum planning, alongside safeguarding intelligence, student voice and evidence-informed practice.

1. Developing confidence and responsibility and making the most of their abilities
2. Giving students the correct information to enable them to be active members of their community who can challenge myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour
3. Developing a healthy, safer lifestyle
4. Developing good relationships and respecting the differences between people

RSE is one theme of PSHE and should be delivered within the broader context of PSHE and Citizenship. (National Curriculum)

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance
DfE statutory RSHE guidance (effective 1 September 2026):
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

4.Policy Development
This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:
1.Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together 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 – Parent/carer consultation takes place through parent/carer forums which all parents and carers are welcome to attend. Parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to contribute their views about the policy at this meeting. This takes place on an annual basis.
Parents and carers will be informed about the planned curriculum, may view representative teaching materials and can request access to all RSHE teaching materials. External providers must share materials with school in advance; copyright or contractual arrangements will not be used to prevent parental access.

4.Student consultation – We investigated what exactly students want from their RSE through student reviews of resources and consultation. This is completed annually.

5.Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

5.Curriculum

Our RSE 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/carers, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

All RSHE curriculum materials will be made available to parents and carers on request, and the school will provide clear information about subject content, sequencing and the right to request withdrawal from sex education.
Sex and Relationships Education aims to:

- explore the nature and implications of marriage, civil partnerships and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society
- recognise the legal status and varied forms of marriage, civil partnerships and committed relationships, including that common-law marriage has no legal status in England and Wales
- understand equality, mutual respect and healthy family and personal relationships without stigmatising any family structure
- prevent and remove prejudice
- develop attitudes and values, personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding
- increase students' understanding of human sexuality and the reasons for and benefits of delaying sexual activity
- enable students to gain information about obtaining appropriate advice on sexual health, including all forms of contraception
- help students to learn how to distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate sexual behaviour
- deepen student's understanding of sexual harassment
- develop maturity, confidence and self-esteem in students
- encourage students to recognise how they can build self-esteem in others
- ensure students are prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- enable young people to acquire the skills and knowledge to make informed choices about their personal and sexual relationships so that they can enjoy their sexuality without harm
- encourage a positive and balanced perception of sexuality enabling individuals to make and implement informed choices about their sexuality and sexual behaviour
- help understand what constitutes a risky or negative relationship

- understand the risks of pornography, sharing nude or semi-nude images (including AI-generated images), online coercion, deepfakes and sexual extortion
- explore values & moral and social issues and consider personal relationships
- develop communication and decision-making skills and foster self-esteem, self-awareness, a sense of responsibility towards others and the skills to avoid and resist abuse and unwanted sexual experiences
  • Address emerging digital harms, including AI chatbots, online disinformation, image-based abuse, sextortion and distorted expectations created by pornography.
  • Learn age-appropriate factual information about sexual and reproductive health, STIs, HIV prevention (including PrEP/PEP where appropriate), fertility, pregnancy choices and accessing confidential health services.
  • Recognise coercive control, domestic abuse, stalking, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour and public sexual harassment; know how to report concerns safely and seek support.
  • Understand that consent is necessary but is not, by itself, sufficient to establish an ethical relationship: relationships also require care, honesty, mutual respect and consideration of vulnerability and unequal power.
  • Challenge misogyny, harmful stereotypes, harassment and misleading online narratives, including harmful influencer content and incel ideology, without stigmatising boys or particular groups.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of students 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 students may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

6.Delivery

RSHE is delivered in Key Stages 3 and 4 through Skills 4 Life (S4L), with related statutory content taught through Science and appropriate complementary learning in Religious Studies and other subjects.

The Skills 4 Life curriculum is delivered in line with the Science curriculum to ensure cohesion.

RSHE teachers receive subject-specific training and use carefully selected, age-appropriate materials. Teaching establishes safe ground rules, avoids requiring personal disclosure and provides opportunities for questions. Staff cannot promise confidentiality; safeguarding concerns must be reported promptly to the designated safeguarding lead or deputy in accordance with school procedures. Parents are involved when appropriate and in line with our safeguarding duty of care.

Specialists will support staff with the teaching of certain aspects of the curriculum. These specialists may include health professionals and other suitable outside agencies.
Visiting specialists and all resources, including digital and AI-generated materials, must be checked in advance for factual accuracy, suitability, accessibility, impartiality and safeguarding risks. Staff remain responsible for lesson delivery and pupil safety.

Biological development and reproduction are addressed through the National Curriculum science programme and reinforced through age-appropriate S4L teaching.
Students will also be given the opportunity to look at the emotional, financial, social and ethical aspects of relationships.

The knowledge content of RSE will address what students already know and what students say they need and include:

- the importance of contraception and the potential consequences of unprotected sex, e.g. unplanned pregnancy, young motherhood and fatherhood, sexually transmitted infections including HIV and AIDS
- positive and negative consequences of sexual behaviour.
- information which aims to educate and encourage students to challenge prejudice and discrimination
- precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.
- how the law applies to sexual relationships
- the risks and law relating to forced marriage, female genital mutilation, virginity testing, hymenoplasty and non-fatal strangulation, as appropriate to the curriculum and safeguarding context.
- age-appropriate education about misogyny and the manosphere, incel subcultures, positive role models, image-based sexual abuse and the impact of pornography on attitudes to sex and relationships.

7.Training
Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of our continuing professional development. Before each Scheme of work is delivered, staff are offered top up training to ensure they feel confident and supported in the delivery of RSE.
Training includes safe handling of disclosures and anonymous questions; SEND adaptation; age-appropriate discussion of pornography and AI harms; misogyny and sexual harassment; and safe delivery of mental-health and suicide-prevention content. Specialist input will be sought when appropriate.

8.Monitoring Arrangements
The delivery of RSE is monitored by Lou Barker through the schools monitoring and quality assurance process. This will include learning walks, work samples and drop in observations.
Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers through assessments designed to check understanding.

Analysis of the safeguarding log will feed back into the S4L curriculum, so that areas of concern are covered.
Student feedback on the curriculum will also ensure that areas covered meet the needs of all stakeholders.
Feedback from Pastoral Mentors ensures the curriculum delivered meets the needs of the students.
An annual curriculum audit will map statutory RSHE knowledge to S4L, Science and other subjects, review assessment and pupil voice, identify duplicated or missing content, and check accessibility and external resources.

9.Inclusion:

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

- We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic and cultural groups and we will respond to parental and/or student queries in order to allay any concerns that may exist about the RSE curriculum.

Students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

- All students, including those with SEND, receive their statutory RSHE entitlement. Staff adapt vocabulary, reading demand, visual supports, processing time, rehearsal, retrieval and scenarios according to need, while maintaining clear and accurate learning and safeguarding expectations.

Sexual Identity, Sexual Orientation and Gender Reassignment

- Teaching about sexual orientation, biological sex and gender reassignment is factual, respectful, age-appropriate and consistent with the Equality Act 2010 and current statutory guidance. We challenge stereotyping and bullying, distinguish facts and law from contested views, and ensure that all students feel safe and respected.

10.Specific Issues:

- Sexual orientation, biological sex and gender reassignment are covered accurately and sensitively, without stereotyping, discrimination or the promotion of any particular sexual orientation. Healthy relationships, including same-sex relationships, are addressed within the wider curriculum.

- Consent, the law, unequal power, pressure, manipulation and ethical decision-making will be taught, including the principle that consent does not alone establish that conduct is caring or appropriate.

- Students will learn to identify and respond to online harms including the sharing of nude or semi-nude images, deepfakes, AI-generated intimate images, coercion and sexual extortion.

- Abortion, when discussed, the views, religious or otherwise, of parents/carers and young people should be respected and students should be given the opportunity to explore the dilemmas, understand about abortion and develop the skills to communicate with staff, parents/carers and health professionals.

- Students will receive accurate, non-stigmatising information on STIs, including HIV, how transmission can be prevented, contraception including condoms, testing, treatment and access to appropriate services.
- Teaching will address STI prevention, symptoms (including that infections can be asymptomatic), testing, treatment and possible consequences, without implying that all STIs are incurable or inevitably cause infertility.

In dealing with all topics, care will be taken by all staff and the school to ensure

- the materials used are appropriate to the age group and are accompanied by explanation and discussion.
- students are protected in school from accessing unsuitable material (e.g. through the internet).
- all teachers of RSE are aware of the role of RSE in trying to reduce the incidence of teenage conceptions.

11.Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents may request withdrawal from some or all sex education delivered as part of RSE, but not from relationships education, health education or the National Curriculum for science. The headteacher will consider each request, normally following discussion with parents and, when appropriate, the pupil. In exceptional circumstances, a secondary-school request may be refused, including on safeguarding grounds. From three terms before a pupil turns 16, the pupil may choose to receive sex education despite an earlier parental request.

Withdrawal requests should be submitted in writing using Appendix 2 and addressed to the headteacher, with the Curriculum Team Leader for Skills 4 Life supporting consultation and arrangements.

A written record of the parental discussion, the headteacher's decision, the pupil's views where appropriate, and any review will be retained within the student's educational record.

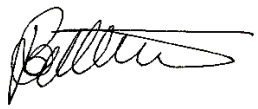
Students withdrawn from sex education will receive appropriate and purposeful alternative education during the period of withdrawal.

12.Outcomes

Students will leave school with choices in regard to their sexual and platonic relationships.
Students will be confident about and value the choices they make.
Students will know where to get help and advice in the future should they need to do so.

This policy will be reviewed by the curriculum team leader for RS and PSHE annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board and the headteacher.

Approved by AQT Governors Committee



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Mr R Matthews -Chairman

……05/11/2026……..
Date

Appendix 1– S4L 2026–27 scheduled RSHE teaching (cross-reference)

The entries below are taken from the attached S4L Weekly Planning Table 2026–27.

Year	Scheduled S4L content
Year 7	Healthy/positive relationships; power in relationships; online pornography; AI impacts and online rights; changing bodies; consent; gender equality; misogyny/incels.
Year 8	Preventing bullying and harmful sexual behaviour; online protection; AI misinformation; FGM; hymenoplasty, virginity testing and forced marriage; misogyny, incels and masculinity.
Year 9	Power and consent; exploitation; sexual harassment; contraception and intimate health; pornography and healthy relationships; menstruation; AI chatbots and relationships.
Year 10	Unhealthy relationships; consent, safety, respect and trust; sexual risk and domestic abuse; online relationships; intimate healthcare and mental health.
Year 11	Pregnancy and unintended pregnancy; AI-related online safety; gender stereotypes; harmful sexual activities; digital deception/deepfakes; mental health and suicide prevention.

Curriculum audit follow-up: verify statutory content not explicit in the weekly plan (including common-law marriage, sexual health service access and HIV prevention, ethical relationships beyond consent, strangulation/suffocation, and SEND-specific provision) against actual lesson materials before claiming full coverage.

Appendix 2: 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	