PSA RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

Date reviewed: September 2026
Date of next review: September 2027

1. Aims of the RSHE policy

- Set out how the school meets its legal requirements in respect of RSHE.
- Give information to staff, parents and carers, governors, pupils and visitors about the content, organisation and approach to teaching RSHE.
- Enable parents and carers to support their children in learning about RSHE.
- Give a clear statement on what the school aims to achieve from RSHE, the values underpinning it and why it is important for secondary school pupils.
- Set out how the school delivers RSHE as part of preventative safeguarding education, including online safety, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment, misogyny, prejudice, consent, healthy relationships, mental wellbeing and how to seek help.

2. Statutory requirements and guidance

As a secondary academy, PSA must provide Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education to pupils receiving secondary education. In teaching RSHE, the school must have regard to the statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

This policy has been updated to reflect the Department for Education Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance published in July 2025 for introduction from 1 September 2026, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and related DfE guidance on safeguarding, online safety, mobile phones in schools, equality and SEND.

Where the school departs from any part of statutory guidance that says schools should or should not do something, leaders will record the rationale and ensure that the approach remains legally compliant, age appropriate, evidence informed and in pupils' best interests.

3. Guiding principles

- Inclusive, age and stage appropriate: RSHE will be carefully sequenced, developmentally appropriate and accessible for all pupils, including pupils with SEND and pupils with additional vulnerabilities.
- Pupil voice: The curriculum will be informed by meaningful engagement with pupils so that it is relevant, responsive and supports them to avoid harm before it occurs.
- Parent and carer engagement: Parents and carers will be consulted when this policy is reviewed and will be able to understand the purpose, content and sequencing of RSHE.
- Openness about materials: Parents and carers may view the curriculum materials used for RSHE, subject to reasonable copyright and safeguarding restrictions. Requests should be made to the RSHE lead through the school office.
- Positive and respectful: Teaching will promote healthy norms, self-respect, respect for others, kindness, consent, responsibility, resilience and equality.
- Avoiding harmful stereotypes: Staff will avoid language that normalises harmful behaviour or stigmatises groups of pupils. Teaching will challenge sexism, racism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia, ableism, prejudice-based bullying and other derogatory Whole-school approach: RSHE is part of the wider PSA approach to safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, personal development, equality, online safety, mental health and wellbeing.

- Faith and community context: Teaching will take account of the religious background of pupils and the Sikh ethos of the Trust, while ensuring pupils are taught the law and understand their rights and responsibilities in modern Britain.
- Safe delivery: Teaching will be participative, factual, non-judgemental and designed to support rather than alarm pupils. Staff will use distancing techniques, ground rules and question boxes where appropriate.

4. Links to other policies

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Behaviour Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Online Safety Policy, Mobile Phone Policy, SEND Policy, Equality Objectives, Attendance Policy, Visiting Speakers/Visitors Policy and Staff Code of Conduct.

Our provision of RSHE is part of our approach to supporting the mental health, safeguarding and wellbeing of children.

5. Definition and scope of RSHE

RSHE helps pupils develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. It supports pupils to understand themselves, others, their rights and responsibilities, how to keep themselves and others safe, and how to seek help.

RSE provides clear progression from primary relationships education and includes teaching about families, friendships, online relationships, being safe, intimate and sexual relationships, sexual health and relevant law. Health Education includes mental wellbeing, internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, health and prevention, basic first aid and the changing adolescent body.

RSHE does not encourage or normalise early sexual experimentation. It supports pupils to understand healthy relationships, consent, the law, sexual health, reproductive health and the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and to resist pressure or avoid pressurising others.

Some RSHE-related content is also taught through statutory Science, Computing, PE, Citizenship and Religious Studies. Parents do not have a right to withdraw pupils from National Curriculum Science or from Relationships Education or Health Education.

6. What is taught in RSHE at PSA

PSA RSHE focuses on giving young people the information and skills they need to develop healthy, nurturing relationships and to keep themselves and others safe. The core areas are:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- Physical health and mental wellbeing

The detailed curriculum map sets out when topics are taught in each year group. It is reviewed annually and shared with parents and carers on request and through the school's normal curriculum information routes.

The curriculum will be responsive to emerging safeguarding, local, community and pupil needs, including harmful online content, online misogyny, sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, AI-generated explicit images, coercive and controlling behaviour, serious violence, county lines, radicalisation, prejudice-based abuse and mental health concerns.

7. Curriculum content and coverage

The table below summarises statutory content and where it is delivered. The precise timing is set out in the RSHE curriculum map and medium-term plans.

Statutory strand	Pupils should know / be taught	Where covered at PSA
Families	Different types of committed and stable relationships; marriage and other long-term relationships; parenting responsibilities; recognising when family or other relationships are unsafe; how to seek help.	PD, RS, English, Psychology KS5, assemblies and tutor periods
Respectful relationships	Positive friendships, trust, respect, honesty, kindness, boundaries, privacy, consent, conflict management, reconciliation and ending relationships; stereotypes and equality; bullying and bystander responsibility; criminal behaviour in relationships; sexual harassment and sexual violence.	PD, RS, History, assemblies, tutor periods and pastoral curriculum
Online and media	Online rights and responsibilities; risks of sharing material; harmful content; pornography; information and data; reporting concerns; discerning online information; online gambling; targeted advertising; misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories and harmful ideologies.	PD, ICT/Computing, assemblies, tutor periods, online safety education
Being safe	The concepts and laws relating to consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based abuse and FGM; communication and withdrawal of consent online and offline.	PD, safeguarding curriculum, assemblies, tutor periods

Intimate and sexual relationships and sexual health	Healthy intimate relationships; choices and pressure; contraception; reproductive health including fertility, miscarriage and menopause; pregnancy choices with medically and legally accurate impartial information; STIs including HIV/AIDS; safer sex; impact of alcohol and drugs; where to access advice and support.	PD, Science, Biology, RS, assemblies/tutor periods where appropriate
Mental wellbeing	Emotional vocabulary; connection with others; early signs of mental wellbeing concerns; common mental ill health; positive and negative effects on mental health; benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, community participation and service.	PD, PE, assemblies, tutor periods, pastoral support
Internet safety and harms	Similarities and differences between online and physical worlds; body image and comparison; curated online lives; over-reliance on online relationships; online abuse, bullying and harassment; how to report or find support.	PD, ICT/Computing, assemblies, tutor periods, online safety education
Physical health and fitness	Active lifestyles; healthy weight; links between inactivity and ill health including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health; blood, organ and stem cell donation.	PD, PE, Science, Biology
Healthy eating	Maintaining healthy eating and the links between poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.	PD, Science, Biology, assemblies
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	Legal and illegal drugs; supply and possession; addiction; alcohol risks; prescribed drugs that can still pose risks; smoking harms and support to quit.	PD, Science, assemblies and tutor periods
Health and prevention	Hygiene, germs, infection, antibiotics; dental health; self-examination and screening; immunisation and vaccination; sleep.	PD, Science, assemblies and tutor periods
Basic first aid	Common injuries, emergency services, CPR and defibrillators.	PD, workshops and assemblies
Changing adolescent body	Puberty, emotional and physical changes, menstrual wellbeing and implications for health.	PD, Science and single-sex assemblies where appropriate

Pupils will be made aware of relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are taught, including marriage, consent and the age of consent, violence against women and girls, online behaviours including

the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes, pornography, abortion, sexuality, gender identity, substance misuse, gang-related violence and exploitation, extremism and radicalisation, criminal exploitation including county lines, hate crime and FGM.

8. Online safety, AI and mobile phones

Online safety is a running and interrelated theme across RSHE, safeguarding, behaviour, ICT/Computing, parental engagement and staff training. The curriculum addresses the 4Cs of online risk: content, contact, conduct and commerce.

- Content: illegal, inappropriate or harmful content such as pornography, racism, misogyny, self-harm, suicide, antisemitism, radicalisation, extremism, extreme sexual or physical violence, misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories.
- Contact: harmful online interaction, including adults posing as children, peer pressure, grooming, exploitation and generative AI applications that simulate harmful interaction.
- Conduct: online behaviour that causes or increases harm, including making, sending or receiving explicit images, including AI-generated images, and online bullying.
- Commerce: online gambling, inappropriate advertising, phishing and financial scams.

The school's mobile phone-free approach supports RSHE and safeguarding by reducing pupils' access to mobile phones during the school day, except where a senior leader has agreed an individual exception.

9. Suicide prevention, self-harm, eating disorders and sensitive health content

The school may teach about sensitive health topics such as eating disorders, self-harm and suicide prevention in a safe, carefully planned and age-appropriate way. Teaching will focus on prevention, coping strategies, sources of support and how to seek help for oneself or others.

Before teaching directly about suicide prevention or eating disorders, leaders will consider the cohort, consult appropriate safeguarding/mental health expertise where needed, use high-quality evidence-based resources and ensure staff are trained and confident. Staff will avoid instructive details, methods, sensationalised images, videos or language that could make self-harm or suicide appear more viable.

Any concern about self-harm, suicidal ideation, eating disorder, abuse, exploitation or neglect must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

10. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is taught through Personal Development (PD) lessons, tutor time, assemblies, subject curriculum links and, where appropriate, workshops delivered by carefully selected specialists or external providers. Biological aspects are taught by specialist Science teachers. Other aspects are supported through RS, ICT/Computing, PE, English, History and wider pastoral provision.

RSHE is delivered through a planned, spiral and age-appropriate programme across Years 7 to 11, with sixth form provision supporting preparation for adult life, relationships, safeguarding, wellbeing and healthy choices.

Staff delivering RSHE receive appropriate training and resources, including training on safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, sexual violence and sexual harassment, online safety, SEND access and how to manage sensitive questions safely.

Teachers will use agreed ground rules, distancing techniques, anonymous question boxes and clear signposting to pastoral and safeguarding support. Questions will be answered factually, sensitively and in an age-appropriate way. Questions that are inappropriate, personal, explicit or indicate a safeguarding concern will not be answered publicly; staff will respond in line with safeguarding procedures.

11. External providers and visitors

External providers may enhance RSHE where they bring specialist knowledge or skills. They do not replace the responsibility of PSA staff for curriculum quality, safeguarding and follow-up.

- The RSHE lead will check the credentials, suitability and safeguarding arrangements of any external provider before the visit.
- The school will review lesson plans and materials in advance to ensure they fit the planned curriculum, published policy, pupil needs, SEND access requirements and the age/stage of pupils.
- The school will agree how questions, confidentiality and safeguarding disclosures will be managed before the session.
- External providers will be supervised in line with the Visiting Speakers/Visitors Policy and the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

12. Parent and carer engagement, transparency and curriculum materials

Parents and carers will be consulted when this policy is developed or reviewed. The school will publish the policy on its website and provide a free copy to anyone who asks for one.

Parents and carers will be informed about the purpose and content of RSHE, when sex education content is taught, and the right to request withdrawal from sex education only. The school will use appropriate routes such as the website, curriculum information, parent communications, consultation events or meetings.

Parents and carers can request to view RSHE curriculum materials by contacting the RSHE lead through the school office. Materials will normally be shared or made available for viewing unless there is a lawful restriction, copyright limitation, safeguarding concern or reasonable operational reason to manage access differently.

Where the school needs to adapt RSHE content in response to emerging pupil, safeguarding or community needs, leaders will consider whether parents should be informed of any significant shift away from the published curriculum and will continue to share relevant materials on request.

13. Right to request withdrawal from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents do not have the right to withdraw pupils from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory Science content, including puberty or sexual reproduction.

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Before deciding, the Headteacher will meet with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil to understand the request, explain the nature and purpose of the curriculum, discuss the benefits of sex education and any possible social, emotional or safeguarding disadvantages of withdrawal, and document the process.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect a parent's request up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. From three terms before the pupil turns 16, the pupil may choose to receive sex education; if they do so, the school will make arrangements for this during one of those terms.

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will provide appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

14. Equality, inclusion and SEND

RSHE will be inclusive and accessible for all pupils. The school will comply with the Equality Act 2010, the Public Sector Equality Duty and the SEND Code of Practice.

Teaching will be sensitive, age appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law. It will take account of pupils' SEND, social, emotional and mental health needs, prior experiences, family background, faith background and additional vulnerabilities.

Pupils will learn about equality and respect, including the protected characteristics. LGBT content will be integrated at a timely and age-appropriate point within the RSHE curriculum rather than treated only as a stand-alone lesson.

The SENCO will be consulted where adaptation is needed. Resources may be differentiated and, where necessary, individualised support will be provided. Staff will be aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, violence and other safeguarding risks.

15. Confidentiality, safeguarding and disclosures

RSHE is not about inviting personal disclosures, but sensitive topics can lead pupils to share concerns. Staff must never promise absolute confidentiality. Pupils will be told that staff will listen, take them seriously and only share information with those who need to know in order to keep them or others safe.

Any disclosure or concern about abuse, neglect, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence,

sexual harassment, self-harm, suicidal thoughts, eating disorders, domestic abuse, coercive control, FGM, forced marriage, honour-based abuse, radicalisation or other safeguarding risk must be reported to the DSL or deputy without delay.

The DSL or deputy should be involved in safeguarding-related RSHE planning where appropriate, including the use of trusted local resources, external providers and support pathways.

16. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation

Pupils' progress in RSHE is assessed through appropriate methods such as teacher assessment, self-assessment, peer assessment, written work, low-stakes checks, reflection tasks and pupil voice.

A senior leader monitors RSHE delivery and works with Heads of Year and the PD lead to monitor the quality of delivery in tutor time, assemblies and dedicated PD lessons. Monitoring includes:

- Observations of assemblies
- Observations of PD lessons
- Observations of RSHE delivery in tutor time
- Student questionnaires and pupil voice
- Student evaluations of external speakers
- Review of curriculum plans, resources and assessment evidence
- Review of safeguarding themes and local/pupil need to inform curriculum adaptation

Data and evidence will be reviewed at three points during the year. An annual report will be produced for the LAB indicating the effectiveness of RSHE provision, key actions, pupil/parent feedback, safeguarding links, equality/SEND access and any curriculum changes required.