ST EDMUND'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

"Let your light shine" – Matthew 5:16

Approved by	Governing Body
Approval date	October 2026
Last reviewed	October 2026
Next review date	September 2027
Policy owner	Headteacher / PSHE-RSHE Lead
Applies to	St Edmund's CE Primary School, including The Lighthouse SRP
Curriculum scheme	Coram SCARF

Respect • Courage • Love • Trust

1. Introduction

At St Edmund's CE Primary School, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) forms an important part of our wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education. It supports our Christian vision, "Let your light shine" (Matthew 5:16), and our values of Respect, Courage, Love and Trust. Through RSHE, we want every pupil to develop the knowledge, understanding, attitudes and practical skills needed to flourish, build positive relationships, keep themselves safe and make responsible choices.

- develop safe, healthy and respectful relationships;
- understand themselves and others;
- recognise and respond to unsafe situations;
- look after their physical and mental health;
- understand how their bodies develop and change;
- develop self-respect, confidence, resilience and empathy;
- understand and respect different families, backgrounds and experiences;
- make informed and responsible choices;
- know when, where and how to seek help; and
- prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

RSHE is taught within a safe, inclusive and developmentally appropriate environment. We recognise the dignity and worth of every child and seek to ensure that all pupils, including pupils with SEND and pupils attending The Lighthouse SRP, can access meaningful and appropriate learning.

2. Statutory Framework

St Edmund's CE Primary School teaches RSHE in accordance with the relevant statutory requirements and Department for Education guidance.

- Relationships Education is statutory at primary school.
- Health Education is statutory at primary school.
- Relevant aspects of human development and reproduction are taught through the statutory National Curriculum for Science.
- Schools may choose to provide additional sex education which goes beyond the statutory Science curriculum.

St Edmund's chooses to provide an age-appropriate programme of sex education as part of its wider RSHE curriculum. This policy distinguishes clearly between statutory Relationships Education, statutory

Health Education, statutory Science curriculum content and additional, non-statutory sex education.

Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory Science curriculum content. Parents may request withdrawal from additional sex education that is not part of the statutory Science curriculum.

3. Our Curriculum

St Edmund's CE Primary School uses Coram SCARF as its principal programme for PSHE and RSHE. SCARF provides a planned and sequenced curriculum which develops pupils' knowledge, understanding, attitudes and skills progressively throughout primary school.

- Science;
- Computing and Online Safety;
- Physical Education;
- Religious Education;
- collective worship;
- safeguarding education;
- wider curriculum opportunities; and
- additional materials or specialist input where this meets an identified pupil need.

The school retains responsibility for its curriculum. SCARF is a resource and programme used to support delivery; professional judgement remains with school leaders and teachers. Teachers will ensure that learning is appropriate to the age, developmental stage, prior knowledge and needs of pupils.

4. Relationships Education

Relationships Education provides pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to establish and maintain safe, positive and respectful relationships.

Families and people who care for us

- families are important sources of love, security and support;
- families can take different forms;
- stable, caring relationships are important for children;
- other children's families may look different from their own;
- differences between families should be respected;
- how to recognise when relationships make them feel unhappy, worried or unsafe; and
- how and where to seek help.

Caring friendships

- what makes a healthy friendship;
- the importance of kindness, honesty, trust, loyalty and respect;
- how friendships can change;
- how to resolve disagreements appropriately;
- that healthy friendships should not make someone feel frightened, isolated or controlled;
- how to recognise unhealthy behaviour; and
- when to seek help.

Respectful relationships

- to respect others, including people who are different from themselves;
- courtesy, manners and consideration;
- the importance of self-respect;
- stereotypes and why these may be unfair or harmful;
- bullying and its impact;
- the responsibilities of bystanders;
- personal boundaries; and
- seeking and giving permission in appropriate everyday contexts.

Online relationships

- people may behave differently online;
- people online may not always be who they say they are;
- the principles of respectful relationships apply online;
- how information can be shared online;
- how to recognise unsafe or harmful contact and content;
- how to protect personal information; and
- how and where to report concerns.

Being safe

- their body belongs to them;
- the correct vocabulary for parts of the body;
- privacy and appropriate boundaries;
- the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact;
- how to recognise feelings of being unsafe or uncomfortable;
- that secrets relating to safety should be shared with a trusted adult;

- how to respond to unfamiliar adults appropriately;
- how to ask for help;
- how to report a concern; and
- to keep asking for help until they are heard.

5. Health Education

Health Education supports pupils to understand their physical health, mental wellbeing and the factors that influence healthy choices.

- mental wellbeing;
- recognising and expressing emotions;
- strategies for managing feelings;
- internet safety and harms;
- physical health and fitness;
- healthy eating;
- drugs, alcohol, tobacco and other harmful substances at an appropriate level;
- health and prevention;
- personal hygiene;
- sleep;
- basic first aid;
- changing adolescent bodies; and
- puberty.

Pupils are taught that looking after mental health is as important as looking after physical health. They learn how to identify trusted adults and sources of support and that it is appropriate to seek help when something is worrying them.

6. Puberty and Growing and Changing

Education about puberty is part of statutory Health Education and relevant elements of the Science curriculum and therefore is not subject to parental withdrawal. Teaching is carefully sequenced so that pupils receive information before they are likely to experience relevant physical or emotional changes.

- how bodies grow and change;
- physical and emotional changes associated with puberty;
- menstruation;
- personal hygiene;
- managing changes confidently and safely;

- correct anatomical vocabulary; and
- where to seek help or advice.

The school recognises that puberty can begin during primary-school age. Teaching will therefore be based on pupil development and need rather than assuming that all pupils experience puberty at the same age. All pupils will receive the information they need to understand changes affecting male and female bodies.

7. Sex Education at St Edmund's

In addition to statutory Relationships Education, Health Education and Science, St Edmund's CE Primary School provides a limited programme of additional sex education for older primary pupils. This is taught through appropriate SCARF content and supporting school resources.

The purpose is to help pupils develop an accurate, safe and developmentally appropriate understanding of human reproduction before transition to secondary school.

- how a baby is conceived;
- pregnancy;
- how a baby develops;
- birth; and
- discussion of these topics within the context of caring, responsible relationships and family life.

Teaching will be factual, sensitive and appropriate to pupils' age and emotional maturity. This content will normally be taught in upper Key Stage 2, primarily in Years 5 and/or 6, according to the school's agreed SCARF curriculum and the needs of the cohort. Parents will be informed in advance about the specific additional sex education content and will have an opportunity to understand the content and view relevant curriculum materials.

8. SCARF Growing and Changing

The SCARF Growing and Changing strand supports teaching about growing and development, body changes, correct anatomical vocabulary, puberty, menstruation, emotional changes, relationships and appropriate aspects of human reproduction. The school will use current SCARF materials appropriate to the statutory requirements in place from September 2026.

Teachers will not simply deliver resources without consideration of the pupils in front of them. Content will be reviewed by the PSHE/RSHE Lead and teachers to ensure that it is age appropriate, developmentally appropriate, consistent with this policy, suitable for the needs of the cohort, accessible to pupils with SEND and consistent with safeguarding expectations.

9. Age and Developmental Appropriateness

RSHE will be taught progressively. The school recognises that chronological age alone does not determine a pupil's level of understanding or readiness.

- pupils' age;
- developmental stage;
- prior knowledge;
- SEND;
- communication needs;
- emotional maturity;
- safeguarding considerations;
- religious and cultural backgrounds; and
- relevant experiences within the cohort.

Sensitive or potentially distressing content will be planned carefully. Teaching will seek to prepare pupils for experiences before they encounter them rather than waiting until issues have already arisen.

10. SEND, The Lighthouse SRP and Accessibility

RSHE is an entitlement for pupils with SEND. At St Edmund's this includes pupils accessing The Lighthouse SRP. The school will make reasonable adjustments so that pupils can access learning in a way that is meaningful, safe and appropriate to their individual communication, cognition, sensory and developmental needs.

- adapting vocabulary and language;
- using visual resources, symbols and concrete materials;
- breaking learning into smaller steps;
- pre-teaching concepts and vocabulary;
- revisiting and overlearning key concepts;
- additional adult support;
- teaching within a smaller group;
- individual teaching where appropriate;
- providing additional processing time;
- adapting methods for pupils who communicate non-verbally or use alternative and augmentative communication; and
- working with parents, carers and external professionals.

Adaptation will not automatically mean removing important safeguarding content. Particular care will be taken to ensure that vulnerable pupils have the knowledge, communication methods and vocabulary needed to recognise unsafe situations, communicate concerns, understand boundaries and seek help. For some pupils, content may need to be taught at a different pace or in a different format while preserving its safeguarding purpose.

11. Equality and Inclusion

RSHE will be delivered in accordance with the school's equality duties and our commitment to treating every pupil with dignity and respect. Teaching will reflect the fact that pupils live in different families and communities.

- married parents;
- unmarried parents;
- single-parent families;
- same-sex parents;
- adoptive families;
- foster families;
- families headed by grandparents; and
- other caring family arrangements.

No pupil will be made to feel that their family is less valued because it is different from another pupil's family. Teaching about difference will be factual, respectful and appropriate to pupils' age. The curriculum will challenge prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harmful stereotypes. This supports our school values, particularly Respect and Love, and our expectation that every member of our community is treated with dignity.

12. Creating a Safe Learning Environment

RSHE involves discussion of potentially sensitive subjects. Teachers will establish appropriate ground rules so pupils understand that different people may have different experiences and views, everyone should be treated respectfully, pupils should not be asked to disclose personal information publicly, inappropriate comments or language will be challenged, teachers cannot promise confidentiality where safeguarding concerns arise, and pupils can speak privately with an adult if something concerns them.

Teachers will avoid activities which unnecessarily encourage pupils to disclose personal experiences in front of their peers.

13. Safeguarding and Disclosures

RSHE is an important element of safeguarding education. Teaching may help a pupil recognise that something they have experienced is unsafe or inappropriate and may therefore lead to a disclosure.

- listen appropriately;
- avoid investigating the concern themselves;
- reassure the pupil appropriately;
- record and report safeguarding concerns in accordance with school procedures; and
- refer concerns immediately to a Designated Safeguarding Lead where required.

Normal safeguarding procedures apply throughout RSHE teaching. If a pupil asks a question or makes a comment which indicates a potential safeguarding concern, safeguarding takes precedence over the lesson.

14. Answering Pupils' Questions

Children are encouraged to ask questions in an appropriate and respectful way. Teachers will answer questions honestly, factually and sensitively, using language appropriate to pupils' age and development and within the scope of the school's curriculum.

Teachers are not expected to answer every question immediately. Where a question falls significantly outside the planned curriculum, is inappropriate for the age or developmental stage of the class, relates to detailed sexual activity outside the primary curriculum, raises a safeguarding concern, or would be more appropriately discussed individually, the teacher may explain that the question will not be answered within the whole-class lesson.

Where appropriate, the teacher may discuss with the pupil how they can obtain accurate and safe information, involve a parent or carer, or seek advice from the PSHE/RSHE Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead. Teachers will not direct pupils towards unrestricted internet searches for answers to sensitive RSHE questions.

15. Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers play a fundamental role in children's understanding of relationships, health, growing and development. St Edmund's aims to work openly and constructively with families.

- publish this policy;
- provide information about what pupils will be taught and when;
- make curriculum materials available for parents to view;
- inform parents before additional sex education is taught;
- provide opportunities for parents to ask questions or raise concerns;

- consult parents when significant changes are proposed to the school's RSHE provision; and
- consult parents about the detailed sex education content taught towards the end of primary school.

Parents are encouraged to discuss RSHE learning with their children at home. The school recognises that families may hold different personal, cultural or religious views. Questions and concerns will be treated respectfully while ensuring that the school fulfils its statutory duties.

16. Access to Curriculum Materials

The school is committed to transparency about RSHE. Parents may request to see the materials used to teach their child. Where materials are provided through SCARF or another commercial provider, access will be arranged in a way which respects relevant copyright and licensing restrictions. Parents will nevertheless be given a meaningful opportunity to understand the content their child will be taught.

17. Parental Right to Withdraw

There is no parental right to withdraw a pupil from Relationships Education, Health Education, statutory National Curriculum Science, or puberty teaching which forms part of statutory Health Education or Science.

Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from additional sex education which goes beyond statutory Science. At St Edmund's, this principally relates to the additional teaching about human conception and birth described in section 7.

Requests should be made to the Headteacher. Before withdrawal takes place, the Headteacher will normally offer to meet with the parent to understand their concerns, explain what will be taught, distinguish statutory and non-statutory content, discuss the benefits of the planned teaching and explain what arrangements will be made if the child is withdrawn. The Executive Headteacher may be involved where appropriate.

Following this discussion, a parental request to withdraw a primary-aged pupil from non-statutory sex education will be granted. The school will keep an appropriate record. A pupil who is withdrawn will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the relevant lesson and will not be disadvantaged or treated negatively because of the withdrawal.

18. External Visitors and Providers

External professionals may occasionally contribute to RSHE where their expertise enhances the school's planned curriculum. The school remains responsible for what is taught.

- their suitability has been appropriately considered;
- the content is consistent with this policy;
- resources have been reviewed;

- material is age and developmentally appropriate;
- safeguarding expectations are clear;
- the session forms part of the planned curriculum; and
- a member of school staff is appropriately involved.

External visitors will not replace the school's responsibility for providing a coherent and sequenced RSHE curriculum.

19. Assessment

Assessment in RSHE is used to establish what pupils know and understand and to inform future teaching. It will be proportionate to the nature of PSHE and RSHE and may include discussion, questioning, pupil reflection, activities within SCARF, written or recorded learning, pupil voice and teachers' professional assessment.

Assessment is not intended to judge pupils' personal beliefs, family circumstances or private experiences.

20. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Body

- approve this policy;
- ensure statutory RSHE requirements are met;
- ensure the curriculum is appropriately resourced and accessible;
- ensure parents receive clear information about curriculum content and withdrawal rights;
- monitor the quality and effectiveness of provision; and
- hold school leaders to account for implementation.

Executive Headteacher

- retain executive strategic oversight of RSHE;
- support assurance that statutory requirements are met;
- ensure the policy and curriculum are appropriately reviewed through trust and governance arrangements;
- support appropriate resourcing and staff development; and
- provide strategic challenge and support to the Headteacher.

Headteacher

- hold overall school-level strategic and operational responsibility for RSHE;
- ensure statutory requirements are met;
- ensure RSHE is taught consistently and effectively;
- support and hold the PSHE/RSHE Lead to account;
- ensure staff understand safeguarding expectations;
- ensure appropriate resources and staff development are available;
- ensure parents are appropriately consulted and informed;
- oversee requests for withdrawal from non-statutory sex education;
- ensure agreed reasonable adjustments are implemented, including within The Lighthouse SRP; and
- report appropriately to the Executive Headteacher and Governing Body.

PSHE/RSHE Lead

- lead the development and implementation of the PSHE and RSHE curriculum;
- ensure SCARF is used appropriately and progressively;
- maintain an overview of curriculum coverage and sequencing;
- ensure current SCARF materials align with school policy and statutory requirements;
- support teachers in planning and delivering sensitive content;
- coordinate access to appropriate resources;
- support staff training;
- monitor teaching and learning;
- gather pupil voice;
- review curriculum materials;
- support parental engagement and consultation; and
- advise the Headteacher on developments in RSHE.

Teachers

- deliver RSHE sensitively and confidently;
- follow the agreed curriculum and policy;
- establish safe learning environments;
- use appropriate language and resources;
- adapt teaching according to pupil need;
- respond appropriately to pupils' questions;
- monitor pupils' understanding;
- identify and report safeguarding concerns; and

- seek support where they are uncertain about the appropriate response to a sensitive issue.

Staff who have concerns about delivering particular content should discuss these with the PSHE/RSHE Lead or Headteacher.

Pupils

- engage appropriately in learning;
- respect others;
- follow agreed classroom expectations;
- recognise that people may have different experiences and views; and
- seek support when they need it.

21. Staff Training

Staff delivering RSHE will receive appropriate support and professional development. This may include SCARF training and guidance, curriculum briefings, safeguarding training, support with answering sensitive questions, SEND and adaptive teaching, teaching about puberty and human reproduction, and relevant statutory updates. New staff will be made aware of the school's RSHE arrangements as part of their induction.

22. Monitoring and Evaluation

The quality and effectiveness of RSHE will be monitored by the PSHE/RSHE Lead, supported by the Headteacher. Monitoring may include curriculum reviews, planning scrutiny, learning walks, pupil voice, discussion with staff, review of pupils' work where appropriate, assessment information, parent feedback and checking coverage against SCARF and statutory requirements.

The Headteacher will maintain strategic and operational oversight at school level. The Executive Headteacher will retain executive oversight through the school's wider leadership and governance arrangements. Monitoring will focus on the quality, sequencing, accessibility and impact of the curriculum rather than solely on the quantity of recorded work produced.

23. Policy Development and Review

This policy has been developed with regard to statutory RSHE requirements, the needs of pupils at St Edmund's CE Primary School and the school's use of the SCARF curriculum. Parents and carers will be consulted appropriately about the school's RSHE provision and significant changes to it. Pupil views will also inform curriculum review where appropriate.

The policy will be reviewed annually initially, or sooner if statutory guidance changes, the school's curriculum changes significantly, SCARF makes significant changes to relevant content, monitoring identifies a need for revision, or safeguarding or equality considerations require an earlier review.

24. Links with Other Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying arrangements;
- SEND Policy;
- SEND Information Report;
- Equality Information and Objectives;
- Accessibility Plan;
- Science Curriculum;
- Computing Curriculum;
- Religious Education Curriculum; and
- relevant trust policies and procedures.

Approval

Approved by	Governing Body
Executive Headteacher	_____
Headteacher	James Johnson
PSHE/RSHE Lead	_____
Review date	September 2027