John Bunyan Primary School & Nursery

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Reviewed by: SLT – Autumn 2026
Next Review Date: Autumn 2028

1. Purpose and aims

John Bunyan Primary School & Nursery is committed to providing high-quality, inclusive Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) which supports the physical, mental, emotional and social development of pupils. RSHE forms an integral part of our wider PSHE curriculum and school life and is taught within a safe, respectful and age-appropriate framework.

Our RSHE provision supports our Core Values and Code of Conduct and reflects our school vision: “At John Bunyan, our school is a place where kindness leads, resilience grows and every pupil is inspired to achieve their full potential with purpose and pride.”

- Promote our Core Values and Code of Conduct.
- Help pupils develop an understanding of healthy life choices.
- Help pupils develop self-respect, confidence, empathy and resilience.
- Help pupils understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within relationships.
- Enable pupils to recognise unsafe situations, protect themselves and ask for help and support.
- Provide a safe framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Create a positive culture around relationships, sexuality, families, diversity and personal identity.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and develop understanding of physical and emotional changes, sexual development, health and hygiene.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves, their bodies, feelings and Teach pupils the correct and age-appropriate anatomical vocabulary to describe themselves, their bodies, including genitalia where appropriate, feelings and relationships, supporting safeguarding, communication and help-seeking.
- Ensure content is accurate, evidence-informed, age-appropriate and appropriately sequenced.
- Enable pupils to develop confidence in accessing help and support.
- Ensure RSHE complements the school's wider curriculum and safeguarding arrangements.

2. Statutory requirements and legal framework

As a maintained primary school, John Bunyan Primary School & Nursery provides Relationships Education to all pupils in accordance with the statutory requirements. Health Education is also taught as part of the statutory curriculum. The biological aspects of sex education contained within the Science National Curriculum are taught through Science.

The school has regard to relevant Department for Education guidance and to its wider legal and safeguarding duties, including the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the Education Act 1996, the Equality Act 2010 and Keeping Children Safe in Education[DM1]. This policy reflects the Department for Education's updated Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance published in July 2025 and implemented from 1 September 2026. The school also operates in accordance with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026 and associated safeguarding requirements.

The school will ensure that RSHE is accessible to pupils with SEND and that reasonable adjustments are made where necessary.

3. Definitions and scope

Relationships Education: teaching about families and people who care for pupils, friendships, respectful relationships, diversity, online relationships, personal boundaries, being safe and how to seek help and support.

Health Education: teaching about physical health, mental wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, nutrition, sleep, personal hygiene, health and prevention, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, basic first aid and recognising when and how to seek help.

Sex Education: at John Bunyan, this includes age-appropriate learning about sexual differences, naming body parts, puberty and sexual development, with the biological aspects of reproduction taught through the Science curriculum. Any additional sex education beyond the statutory Science curriculum will be clearly identified and communicated to parents.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. It is about helping pupils understand relationships, health, safety, development, respect and personal responsibility within an appropriate moral and educational framework.

4. Curriculum design and content

Curriculum principles

- Learning is sequenced progressively so that pupils build knowledge and understanding across year groups.
- Key concepts are revisited and developed so that pupils know more and remember more.
- Content is age-appropriate, evidence-informed, culturally sensitive and matched to pupils' level of maturity.
- Lessons support positive attitudes, resilience, emotional wellbeing, respect and personal responsibility.
- RSHE is embedded within PSHE and is reinforced through the wider curriculum and all aspects of school life.

Core themes

- Families and people who care for me
- Family and friends
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Diversity and communities
- Working together
- Safety in public spaces, including road, rail, water and fire safety.
- Recognising risks in different environments and understanding how to seek help in emergencies.
- Online relationships, online safety and internet harms[DM2]
- Understanding age-appropriate online financial risks including scams, fraud, misleading online advertising, in-app purchases and gaming monetisation.
- Knowing how to seek help and report concerns relating to online financial exploitation.
- Mental wellbeing and managing emotions
- Healthy lifestyles, nutrition, exercise and sleep
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid and knowing when/how to seek help

- Growing and changing, including puberty, bodily changes, menstruation and age-appropriate reproduction

John Bunyan curriculum

John Bunyan uses materials from the Cambridge PSHE scheme to teach Relationships and Health Education. The broad topics include:

- Family and Friends
- My Emotions
- Personal Safety
- Managing Risk
- Safety Contexts
- Healthy Lifestyles
- Diversity and Communities
- Working Together
- Drug Education

RSHE is also supported through Science, Computing, Design & Technology, PE and RE. Computing contributes to online safety and appropriate online relationships; Design & Technology contributes to healthy eating; PE contributes to healthy lifestyles and exercise; and RE supports learning about family relationships, different family groups, friendship, rituals and traditions.

RSHE also forms part of our Core Learning Skills, Core Values and Code of Conduct and is reinforced through the wider life of the school.

5. Progression and content by age

The RSHE lead will maintain a curriculum map and lesson sequence showing how statutory content and the school's priorities are developed across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Learning will be sequenced to provide pupils with preventative knowledge, understanding and skills before they are likely to encounter specific risks or situations. Learning will be adapted according to age, maturity and SEND needs.

Puberty is taught in an age-appropriate way, typically in Upper Key Stage 2. Learning includes physical and emotional changes, menstruation, hygiene, body development and knowing when and how to seek help.

The biological aspects of reproduction are taught through the Science curriculum in accordance with the National Curriculum. Children learn about life cycles, offspring and human development through the relevant Science objectives.

Where additional sex education is considered appropriate beyond statutory Science content, the school will identify this clearly to parents and explain any applicable parental rights.

6. Teaching methods and safe practice

- Teachers establish clear ground rules for respectful discussion.
- Pupils are encouraged to use correct vocabulary and understand that they can indicate that they do not wish to answer a personal question.

- Discussion, scenarios, stories, role play, circle time and other age-appropriate participatory approaches may be used.
- Distancing techniques, including fictional characters and third-person scenarios, may be used to prevent pupils feeling pressured to disclose personal experiences.
- Teachers respond to questions sensitively and in an age-appropriate way.
- Questions which are safeguarding-related, outside the taught content or inappropriate for the pupil's age will be handled in line with safeguarding procedures.
- Staff will not promise confidentiality where a safeguarding concern is disclosed.
- Teaching will be respectful and inclusive and will not endorse any particular faith or cultural practice[DM3].
- Teaching will be delivered using a trauma-informed approach where appropriate. Staff will recognise that some sensitive content may be particularly relevant or challenging for individual pupils and will ensure appropriate support is available.

7. Inclusion, SEND and accessibility

- RSHE is inclusive of pupils regardless of background, family structure, identity or circumstance.
- Teaching will reflect a range of family structures sensitively, including single-parent families, LGBT parents, adoptive and foster families, families headed by grandparents, looked-after children and young carers.
- Resources and teaching approaches will be adapted for pupils with SEND and reasonable adjustments will be made to enable access.
- The school may consult the SENDCo, therapists, parents/carers and other relevant professionals when planning personalised support.
- Teaching will challenge stereotypes and promote respect for protected characteristics in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

8. Parents, carers and the right to withdraw

The school recognises the important role of parents and carers as the primary educators of their children in matters relating to relationships, health and personal development. Parents will be informed about the RSHE curriculum and will have opportunities to view curriculum information and ask questions.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw pupils from Relationships Education or from statutory Health Education, nor from the biological aspects of Sex Education taught as part of the Science National Curriculum.

Where the school proposes to teach sex education outside the Science curriculum, parents will be informed in advance. Any statutory right to request withdrawal from that specific additional sex education will be explained to parents, and requests will be considered in accordance with the school's legal duties and published procedure.

- Requests for withdrawal from additional sex education should be made in writing to the Headteacher.
- The Headteacher and RSHE lead will explain the provision and the likely impact of withdrawal.
- The school will consider the pupil's maturity and wishes as appropriate.
- Where withdrawal is agreed, meaningful alternative education will be provided.
- The school will keep appropriate records of parental requests and decisions.

Parents will be given appropriate notice of significant RSHE content, particularly puberty and any additional sex education content, and the school will make resources or further information available where appropriate.

9. Safeguarding, sensitive issues and pupil safety

RSHE supports the school's safeguarding responsibilities by helping pupils recognise unsafe situations, inappropriate or abusive behaviour, grooming, risks online and ways of seeking help.

- Staff will remain alert to disclosures or signs of abuse and follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures without delay.
- A pupil making a disclosure will be listened to and reassured, but staff will not promise confidentiality.
- Concerns will be recorded and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with school procedures.
- Parents/carers will be involved where appropriate and in accordance with safeguarding procedures.
- Pupils will be signposted to appropriate internal pastoral support and, where necessary, external services.
- External speakers and providers will be subject to the school's safeguarding, suitability and supervision arrangements[DM4].
- RSHE supports pupils in recognising a range of contemporary risks, including unsafe situations in the community, online exploitation, financial harms, inappropriate content and harmful behaviours both online and offline.

10. External providers

External providers may be used where they add value to the curriculum. The RSHE lead and senior leaders will agree the aims, content, resources and intended outcomes with the provider in advance. External sessions will remain under the oversight of school staff and must reflect the school's values, curriculum and safeguarding expectations.

11. Roles and responsibilities

Governing Body

- Ensure statutory compliance and approve the RSHE policy through the agreed governance arrangements.
- Ensure RSHE is appropriately resourced and timetabled.
- Monitor implementation and impact through reports from senior leaders.

Headteacher and Senior Leaders

- Ensure the policy is implemented consistently across the school.
- Ensure staff have appropriate training, guidance and resources.
- Ensure sufficient curriculum time is allocated to RSHE.
- Ensure inclusion, pastoral support and safeguarding are appropriately linked to RSHE.

RSHE/PSHE Lead

- Maintain a sequenced RSHE curriculum aligned with statutory guidance and the school's values.
- Lead on curriculum development, staff CPD, resources and evaluation.

- Monitor implementation and outcomes and report to senior leaders and governors.
- Liaise with parents and external providers as appropriate.

Class Teachers and Staff

- Deliver RSHE in line with this policy and the agreed curriculum.
- Create a safe and respectful classroom environment.
- Model positive attitudes and respectful language.
- Monitor pupil understanding and progress.
- Respond to individual needs, including SEND.
- Identify and report safeguarding concerns in accordance with school procedures.
- Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE; concerns should be discussed with the Headteacher.

Pupils

- Engage respectfully in RSHE lessons.
- Follow agreed classroom ground rules.
- Treat others with respect and sensitivity.
- Speak to a trusted adult if they are worried or need help.

Parents and carers

- Engage with information provided by the school.
- Support the school by reinforcing key messages about health, safety, relationships and respect at home.
- Raise questions or concerns through the school's agreed channels.

12. Staff training and support

- RSHE is included in staff induction and the continuing professional development programme.
- Staff will receive guidance on safeguarding, handling sensitive questions, responding to disclosures and delivering age-appropriate content.
- Subject-specific training and external professional input may be provided where appropriate.
- Staff will have access to current, quality-assured and evidence-informed resources.
- Leaders will ensure staff have appropriate time and support to plan and deliver RSHE effectively.

13. Monitoring, assessment and evaluation

- The Senior Leadership Team will monitor RSHE through planning scrutiny, learning walks, liaison with teachers and other appropriate monitoring activities.
- The RSHE lead will monitor curriculum coverage, lesson delivery, pupil learning and pupil voice.
- Class teachers will monitor pupils' development through the school's internal assessment systems.
- Formative assessment will be used to identify understanding and gaps in learning; appropriate summative assessment may be used where helpful.
- Pupil voice will be gathered periodically to evaluate relevance, understanding and the effectiveness of provision.
- The curriculum will be reviewed annually and adjusted in response to evidence, safeguarding trends, pupil needs and relevant changes in guidance.
- Records relating to parental withdrawal requests, staff training and relevant safeguarding incidents will be maintained in accordance with school procedures and data protection requirements.

14. Complaints, parental engagement and governance

Parents should raise concerns through the school's complaints procedure. The RSHE lead or Headteacher will seek to resolve concerns informally where appropriate before the formal complaints process is followed.

The school will provide appropriate curriculum information to parents and will involve parents in consultation and engagement around RSHE provision. Governors will monitor the implementation and quality of RSHE through the school's established governance arrangements.

15. Review and policy update process

This policy will be reviewed at least biannually, or sooner where there are changes to statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements, local need or evidence from monitoring and evaluation. The RSHE lead and senior leaders will coordinate the review, and changes will be communicated to staff, governors and parents as appropriate.

Next scheduled review: Spring 2028

16. Key procedures and implementation checklist

- Maintain a current RSHE curriculum map and progression overview.
- Provide parents with information about curriculum content and significant puberty/sex education learning in advance.
- Maintain the parental withdrawal process and appropriate records.
- Ensure safeguarding reporting procedures are understood by all staff.
- Quality-assure external providers, objectives and resources.
- Maintain staff induction and CPD arrangements.
- Ensure reasonable adjustments and accessibility arrangements for pupils with SEND.
- Undertake planned monitoring through learning walks, planning scrutiny and pupil voice.
- Report RSHE implementation and impact to governors through the established reporting structure.
- Publish the policy on the school website and provide a copy on request.

17. Linked documents and curriculum sources

- Safeguarding / Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SEND Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Curriculum Policy
- Intimate Care Policy
- Mental Health and Well-being arrangements
- Consent and Positive Touch arrangements
- PSHE curriculum overview

- Science curriculum coverage of biological aspects of sex education