Relationship Sex and Health Education policy

St Vincent's School for Sensory Impairment and Other Needs

Approved by:	Mr. L. Green	**Date:** 16/12/2025
Last reviewed on:	12/2025	
Next review due by:	10/2026	

Contents

---

1. Our Commitment & Aims

At St Vincent's school, our RSHE programme reflects and reinforces our school's ethos and supports our mission to nurture confident, compassionate, and responsible individuals. Through age-appropriate and inclusive RSE, we aim to equip pupils with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to form healthy relationships, make safe and informed choices, and understand the importance of respect for themselves and others. By embedding RSE within our wider values and culture, we ensure that learning is not only about knowledge, but also about developing the character, empathy, and social understanding that underpin our school's vision.

We recognise that:

- RSHE is essential for keeping children safe and preparing them for life in modern Britain
- Our pupils with sensory impairments and other SEND may be more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and bullying
- RSHE must be carefully adapted to be accessible for pupils with visual impairment and other needs
- RSHE must be age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate
- Parents and carers are key partners in their children's RSHE

Our Aims

Our RSHE programme aims to:

Prevent harm by equipping pupils with knowledge and skills to:

- Recognise and report abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- Keep themselves safe online, including from new threats like AI-generated content and sextortion
- Understand consent, boundaries, and healthy relationships
- Identify and resist exploitation and grooming

Promote equality by:
- Challenging stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination   - Teaching about protected characteristics and equality   - Promoting respect for diversity   - Addressing misogyny, homophobia, and other forms of prejudice
Support wellbeing by teaching about:
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing   - Healthy relationships and friendships   - Physical health and development   - Where to seek help and support
Prepare for adulthood by teaching about:
- The responsibilities and opportunities of adult life   - Healthy sexual relationships (where appropriate)   - Reproductive health and contraception (where appropriate)   - Making informed decisions
Be inclusive by:
- Ensuring all pupils, including those with SEND, can access high-quality RSHE   - Adapting teaching methods and resources to meet individual needs   - Using the graduated approach to support pupils who need additional help   - Working with specialists to remove barriers to learning

2. Statutory requirements

2.1 Statutory Requirements

As a non-maintained special school, we must provide:

Relationships Education to all pupils under:

- Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Statutory Guidance 2026 (effective September 2026)

Health Education to all pupils under:

- Section 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Statutory Guidance 2026

Sex Education (beyond the science curriculum):

- We have chosen to provide sex education to our pupils, recognising their right to age and developmentally appropriate information
- Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education (but not from relationships education or health education)

2.2 Policy Requirements

We must:

- Have an up-to-date written policy for RSHE (this document)
- Develop and review the policy in consultation with parents, pupils, and staff
- Publish the policy on our website and make it available free of charge
- Review the policy at least annually

2.3 Other Relevant Legislation and Guidance

This policy also has regard to:

Equality and Inclusion:
• The Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty • The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice (DfE) • SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015, updated 2024)
Safeguarding:
• Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025 • Working Together to Safeguard Children • Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE)
Curriculum:
• National Curriculum science programmes of study • Ofsted Education Inspection Framework 2025
Other:
• Behaviour in schools (DfE) • Mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE) • Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions (DfE)

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. 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 – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

3.1 Ongoing Consultation

We will continue to consult with pupils, parents, and staff through:

- Annual parent consultation events before teaching sensitive topics
- Termly school council discussions about RSHE
- Annual surveys for pupils, parents, and staff
- Individual meetings as needed
- Making all curriculum materials available to parents on request

4. Definition

4.1 Relationships Education

Relationships Education teaches pupils about the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, including:

- Families and people who care for me: Different types of families, the characteristics of healthy family life, how to ask for help
- Caring friendships: How to make and maintain friendships, the importance of trust and respect
- Respectful relationships: The importance of respect, boundaries, privacy, consent
- Online relationships: How to stay safe online, recognising risks, where to seek help
- Being safe: How to recognise abuse and unsafe situations, how to ask for help

Relationships Education is statutory, and parents cannot withdraw their children from it.

4.2 Sex Education

Sex Education teaches pupils about:

- Human reproduction and sexual development: How babies are made, puberty and the changing body, menstruation and menopause
- Contraception and sexual health: Methods of contraception, sexually transmitted infections, where to access sexual health services
- Consent and the law: The legal age of consent, what consent means, laws relating to sexual offences
- Healthy sexual relationships: What makes a healthy sexual relationship, the importance of communication and respect

Sex Education (beyond what is taught in the science curriculum) is not statutory, but we have chosen to provide it. Parents can request that their child is withdrawn from sex education (see section 10).

4.3 Health Education

Health Education teaches pupils about:

- Mental wellbeing: Understanding mental health, how to maintain good mental health, where to seek help
- Internet safety and harms: Online risks including cyberbullying, harmful content, AI-generated content, sextortion
- Physical health and fitness: The benefits of physical activity, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle
- Healthy eating: What constitutes a healthy diet, the risks of poor nutrition
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco: The facts about legal and illegal substances, the risks of substance misuse
- Health and prevention: How to maintain good health, the importance of vaccinations, basic hygiene
- Basic first aid: How to administer CPR, how to treat common injuries, when to call emergency services
- Changing adolescent body: Puberty, menstruation, physical and emotional changes

Health Education is statutory, and parents cannot withdraw their children from it.

4.4 RSHE

RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) is the combination of these three subjects. At St Vincent's School, RSHE is taught as part of our broader PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education) curriculum.

5. Curriculum

Statutory content we cover:

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

- Online relationships
- Being safe

Our RSHE curriculum is based on seven key principles from the statutory guidance:

5.1 Engagement with Pupils

We involve pupils in curriculum development through:

- School council discussions about what pupils want to learn
- Pupil surveys about RSHE topics
- Pupil feedback after lessons and units of work
- Co-production of resources where appropriate
- Listening to pupils' questions and concerns

5.2 Engagement and Transparency with Parents

We are transparent with parents about all RSHE content and materials. We:

- Publish our curriculum map on our website showing what is taught and when
- Make all teaching materials available to parents on request
- Send letters home before teaching about sex education, giving parents time to request withdrawal
- Invite parents to view resources at school
- Respond promptly to parent questions and concerns

Parents can request to view any RSHE materials by contacting: office@stvin.com

5.3 Positivity

We focus on building positive attitudes, skills, and healthy norms. Our RSHE curriculum:

- Emphasises the positive aspects of relationships and health
- Builds skills for healthy relationships, not just knowledge
- Promotes kindness, respect, and care for others
- Avoids language that normalises harmful behaviour
- Celebrates diversity and difference
- Focuses on what pupils can do to stay safe and healthy, not just on risks

We avoid:

- Gendered language that might normalise male violence or stigmatise boys
- Language that suggests certain groups are always victims or always perpetrators
- Scaremongering or creating unnecessary anxiety
- Focusing only on risks without teaching protective skills

5.4 Careful Sequencing

We sequence our curriculum so that pupils are supported and equipped with knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, to prevent harms.

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to:

- Build knowledge progressively from early years through to post-16
- Teach age-appropriate content at the right time
- Prepare pupils for experiences before they encounter them
- Revisit and deepen understanding as pupils mature
- Respond to emerging issues and local context

Example of sequencing:

- Early years/Key Stage 1: Understanding families, friendships, keeping safe, appropriate and inappropriate touch
- Key Stage 2: Puberty and the changing body, online safety, recognising abuse
- Key Stage 3: Healthy relationships, consent, sexual health, online risks including sextortion
- Key Stage 4/Post-16: Sexual relationships, contraception, sexual health services, preparation for adulthood

5.5 Relevant and Responsive

We develop our curriculum to be relevant, age and stage appropriate, and accessible to our pupils. We:

- Adapt content to reflect our pupils' needs, including sensory impairment and other SEND
- Respond to local issues and concerns (e.g., specific online risks in our area)
- Update our curriculum to address emerging issues (e.g., new online threats, local safeguarding concerns)
- Ensure content is developmentally appropriate, not just age-appropriate
- Consider the specific vulnerabilities of our pupils with SEND

5.6 Skilled Delivery of Participative Education

Our curriculum is delivered by staff who have the knowledge, skills, and confidence to:

- Create a safe and supportive learning environment
- Facilitate participative and interactive education
- Handle sensitive topics appropriately
- Respond to disclosures and safeguarding concerns
- Adapt teaching for pupils with SEND
- Use appropriate resources and teaching methods

We ensure skilled delivery through:

- Comprehensive staff training
- Clear guidance and lesson plans
- Access to specialist support (e.g., school nurse, SENCO)
- Regular CPD and updates
- Peer support and sharing of good practice
- Involvement of external specialists where appropriate

Staff are trained to:

- Support pupils, not alarm them
- Recognise that RSHE lessons may lead to increased safeguarding disclosures
- Follow safeguarding procedures if concerns arise
- Never promise confidentiality to pupils

5.7 Whole School Approach

RSHE is delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships. Our RSHE curriculum is supported by:

School policies:

- Behaviour policy - promotes respect, kindness, and positive relationships
- Safeguarding/child protection policy - ensures pupils know how to report concerns
- Anti-bullying policy - addresses all forms of bullying including sexual harassment
- Online safety policy - protects pupils from online harms

- Equality and diversity policy - promotes respect for all protected characteristics

School culture:

- Staff model positive behaviour and respectful relationships
- We challenge sexism, misogyny, homophobia, and other prejudice
- We have a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and violence
- We create an inclusive environment where all pupils feel valued
- We promote positive masculinity and femininity

Pastoral support:

- Access to trained pastoral staff
- Links to external support services (e.g., CAMHS, sexual health services)
- Designated safeguarding lead available for concerns
- School Health care coordinator (HCC) available for health questions

Other curriculum areas:

- Science curriculum covers human reproduction and health
- Computing curriculum covers online safety
- PE curriculum promotes physical health
- Citizenship curriculum (if applicable) covers rights and responsibilities

Our RSHE curriculum covers all statutory content from the DfE guidance, adapted to meet the needs of our pupils with sensory impairment and other SEND.

Full curriculum maps are available:

- On our website: www.stvin.com
- From the school office
- By emailing: office@stvin.com

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, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Curriculum Intent

What we want pupils to know and be able to do by the time they leave our school:

By the time pupils leave St Vincent's School, they will:

Know:

- How to build and maintain healthy relationships
- How to recognise and report abuse, including sexual violence and harassment
- How to keep themselves safe online, including from emerging threats
- The facts about puberty, reproduction, and sexual health
- The importance of consent and what the law says
- How to maintain good physical and mental health
- Where to access help and support
- Their rights and responsibilities
- The importance of equality and respect for diversity

Be able to:

- Communicate effectively in relationships
- Set and respect boundaries
- Recognise when a relationship is unhealthy
- Ask for help when they need it
- Make informed decisions about their health and relationships
- Navigate online spaces safely
- Challenge prejudice and discrimination
- Access health services independently (where appropriate)

Understand:

- That they have the right to be safe and respected
- That abuse is never the victim's fault
- That healthy relationships are based on mutual respect, trust, and communication
- That everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect
- The importance of kindness, care, and empathy in all relationships

Curriculum Implementation

How we teach RSHE:

RSHE is taught through:

- Discrete PSHE lessons: One lesson per week
- Cross-curricular links: RSHE themes are reinforced in science, computing, PE, and other subjects
- Assemblies and tutor time: Key messages reinforced through whole-school and class assemblies
- Themed days/weeks: E.g., anti-bullying week, mental health awareness week, internet safety day
- Pastoral support: One-to-one and small group work for pupils who need additional support
- External workshops: Carefully selected external organisations deliver specialist sessions (e.g., police, sexual health services)

Teaching methods:

We use a variety of teaching methods to ensure RSHE is accessible and engaging for all pupils:

- Discussion and debate
- Role play and drama
- Stories, books, and videos (in accessible formats)
- Case studies and scenarios
- Games and activities
- Visiting speakers
- Multi-sensory resources (tactile, audio, visual)
- Assistive technology
- Differentiated resources and activities

Creating a safe learning environment:

We create a safe and supportive learning environment by:

- Establishing clear ground rules at the start of each unit
- Explaining confidentiality and when we might need to share information
- Allowing pupils to opt out of activities that make them uncomfortable (with alternative work provided)
- Providing opportunities for one-to-one support if needed
- Using appropriate, inclusive language
- Respecting pupils' diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Never forcing pupils to share personal information

Curriculum Impact

How we measure the impact of our RSHE curriculum:

We evaluate the impact of our RSHE curriculum through:

Pupil knowledge and understanding: • Pre- and post-unit assessments (adapted for pupils' needs) • Pupil voice activities and surveys • Observations of pupils applying learning in real situations • Pupil work and reflections
Pupil attitudes and behaviour: • Reduction in bullying and harassment incidents • Increase in pupils reporting concerns appropriately • Positive relationships between pupils • Respectful behaviour across the school • Pupils challenging prejudice and discrimination
Pupil wellbeing: • Pupil wellbeing surveys • Attendance and engagement data • Safeguarding data (noting that increased reporting may indicate pupils feel safe to disclose) • Feedback from pupils, parents, and staff
Preparation for adulthood: • Pupils' confidence in accessing support services • Pupils' ability to make informed decisions • Pupils' understanding of healthy relationships • Pupils' readiness for next steps (further education, employment, independent living)

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance and share any relevant materials on request.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

Across our school, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

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

7. Inclusivity – Making RSHE Accessible for Pupils with SEND

Our Commitment

Teaching is developed to ensure these subjects are accessible for pupils with SEND and prepare pupils for adulthood, as set out in the SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years. As this applies to both mainstream and special schools.

As a specialist school for pupils with sensory impairment, we are committed to ensuring all our pupils can access high-quality RSHE that meets their individual needs.

Why RSHE is Particularly Important for Pupils with SEND

Schools should be 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.

Our pupils with SEND may:

- Be more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, and bullying
- Have additional communication needs that make it harder to report concerns
- Have less access to informal sources of information about relationships and sex
- Face additional barriers to accessing sexual health and support services
- Have specific needs related to puberty, personal care, and relationships
- Need more explicit teaching about topics that other young people might learn informally
- Be at greater risk of social isolation and loneliness

RSHE is therefore particularly important for our pupils, and we ensure it is a priority.

Adapting Teaching Methods

We adapt our teaching methods to ensure RSHE is accessible for all pupils:

For pupils with visual impairment:
- Use of tactile resources (e.g., anatomically correct dolls and models, tactile diagrams) - Audio descriptions of visual content - Large print resources with high contrast - Braille materials - Clear, explicit verbal descriptions (not relying on visual demonstrations) - Multi-sensory teaching approaches - Use of real objects where possible rather than pictures - Accessible digital resources compatible with screen readers - Additional time for exploring tactile resources
For pupils with other communication needs:
- Use of communication aids (e.g., symbols, signing, communication devices) - Simplified language and short sentences - Visual supports (for pupils who can access them) - Repetition and reinforcement of key concepts - Concrete examples and real-life scenarios - Social stories and scripts - One-to-one pre-teaching of key vocabulary
For pupils at different developmental stages:
- Content adapted to developmental age, not just chronological age - Smaller steps and more repetition - Concrete, practical teaching rather than abstract concepts - Focus on functional skills and real-life application - Links to personal care routines and daily life
For pupils with additional needs:
- Sensory breaks during lessons if needed - Quiet spaces for one-to-one discussions - Additional adult support where needed - Flexible groupings (sometimes teaching in smaller groups or one-to-one) - Modified activities that don't rely on skills the pupil finds difficult - Alternative ways of recording learning (e.g., audio recording, photographs, adult scribing)

Using the Graduated Approach

We use the graduated approach (assess, plan, do, review) to ensure RSHE meets individual needs:

Assess:
• We work with pupils, parents, and specialists to understand individual needs related to RSHE • We consider communication needs, sensory needs, developmental stage, personal care needs, vulnerability to abuse, previous experiences, family circumstances
Plan:
• We identify specific adaptations and support needed • We document these in the pupil's support plan or EHC plan • We plan resources, staffing, and teaching approaches • We consult with parents about sensitive topics
Do:
• Staff deliver RSHE using planned adaptations • Additional adults provide support as planned • Accessible resources are used • Teaching is differentiated appropriately
Review:
• We review the effectiveness of adaptations regularly • We gather feedback from pupils, parents, and staff • We adjust our approach based on what's working • We update support plans as needed

Working with Specialists

We work closely with specialists to ensure RSHE is accessible and appropriate:

Qualified Teachers of the Visually Impaired (QTVIs):
• Advise on accessible resources and teaching methods • Create tactile resources • Support staff with adapting materials • Work with individual pupils who need additional support
Speech and Language Therapists:
• Advise on communication strategies • Support development of vocabulary for RSHE • Create communication resources (e.g., symbol-based materials)
Occupational Therapists:
• Advise on sensory needs and sensory-friendly teaching • Support with personal care skills linked to RSHE (e.g., managing menstruation)
Educational Psychologists:
• Advise on developmental appropriateness • Support with pupils who have experienced trauma • Advise on supporting pupils with complex needs
School Health Care Coordinator:
• Provide health education input • Support with puberty education • Advise on personal care and hygiene

CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services):

- Support pupils with mental health needs
- Advise on supporting pupils with trauma
- Provide specialist input where needed

Accessible Resources

All RSHE resources are available in multiple formats:

Print materials:	Braille materials:
- Large print (various font sizes available) - High contrast - Clear fonts (e.g., Arial, Comic Sans) - Uncluttered layouts - Good use of white space	- Grade 1 and Grade 2 braille - Tactile diagrams - Braille labels on models and resources
Audio materials:	**Tactile materials:**
- Audio recordings of written materials - Audio descriptions of visual content - Podcasts and audio resources	- Anatomically correct dolls and models - Tactile diagrams of body parts - Real objects where possible - Textured materials
Digital materials:	**Video materials:**
- Accessible PDFs - Screen reader compatible - Keyboard navigable - Alternative text for images	- Audio description available - Captions/subtitles available - Transcripts provided

9.7 Addressing Increased Vulnerability

We recognise that our pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to:

- Sexual abuse and exploitation
- Bullying and harassment
- Inappropriate relationships
- Online grooming and exploitation
- Being taken advantage of

We address this by:

- Teaching explicitly about abuse and exploitation (in age-appropriate ways)
- Teaching pupils to recognise warning signs
- Teaching pupils how to say no and ask for help
- Ensuring pupils know who to talk to if they're worried
- Working closely with parents to reinforce messages at home
- Monitoring pupils' relationships and online activity (with appropriate safeguarding)
- Providing additional support for pupils we know to be vulnerable
- Working with external agencies (e.g., police, social care) where needed

Supporting Personal Care

For some of our pupils, RSHE links closely to personal care routines. We:

- Teach about personal hygiene and self-care as part of RSHE
- Support pupils to manage menstruation independently (where possible)

- Teach about appropriate and inappropriate touch in the context of personal care
- Work with families to ensure consistent approaches
- Respect pupils' privacy and dignity
- Involve pupils in decisions about their personal care as much as possible
-

Preparing for Adulthood

Our RSHE curriculum prepares pupils for adulthood by teaching about:

- Independent living skills (linked to RSHE topics)
- Accessing health services independently
- Healthy adult relationships
- Sexual health and contraception (where appropriate)
- Staying safe in the community
- Employment and relationships in the workplace
- Further education and adult life

This links to the "preparing for adulthood" outcomes in the SEND Code of Practice:

- Employment
- Independent living
- Community inclusion
- Health

8. Use of external organisations and materials

At school, we will make sure that any agency and any materials used are accurate, age and stage appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality. We will make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:

- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
- Comply with this policy

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme
- Work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The Headteacher

The Headteacher at St Vincent's school will:

- Ensure this policy is implemented effectively
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training and support
- Ensure RSHE is taught consistently across the school
- Ensure the curriculum is age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, and accessible for pupils with SEND
- Monitor the quality of RSHE teaching
- Handle requests from parents to withdraw pupils from sex education
- Report to governors on RSHE provision and impact

- Ensure safeguarding procedures are followed

9.2 Subject leader

The RSHE lead is: Mr. Lee Green

The RSHE lead will:

- Develop and review the RSHE curriculum
- Ensure the curriculum meets statutory requirements
- Coordinate RSHE teaching across the school
- Provide guidance and support to staff
- Organise staff training and CPD
- Source and quality-assure resources
- Work with external organisations
- Consult with pupils, parents, and staff
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of RSHE
- Keep up to date with research, guidance, and best practice
- Lead on policy development and review

9.3 The Governing Body

The governing body will:

- Approve this policy and hold leaders to account for its implementation
- Ensure the school complies with statutory requirements for RSHE
- Ensure RSHE is taught in a way that is appropriate for the age and stage of pupils
- Ensure the school consults with parents when developing and reviewing the policy
- Ensure parents understand their right to request withdrawal from sex education
- Monitor the impact of RSHE on pupil outcomes
- Ensure sufficient resources and training are provided for RSHE

The governor with responsibility for RSHE is Bernadette Buckle

9.4 Classroom teacher

Classroom teachers at our school will:

- Deliver RSHE in line with this policy and the curriculum plan
- Create a safe and supportive learning environment
- Adapt teaching to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND
- Use appropriate, inclusive language
- Follow safeguarding procedures if concerns arise
- Never promise confidentiality to pupils
- Answer questions appropriately (see section 11)
- Work with parents and external organisations as appropriate
- Participate in training and CPD
- Evaluate the impact of their teaching

9.5 The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- Ensure staff understand safeguarding procedures in the context of RSHE
- Be available to support staff if safeguarding concerns arise during RSHE lessons
- Ensure pupils know how to report concerns
- Handle any safeguarding disclosures appropriately
- Work with external agencies as needed
- Monitor safeguarding data related to RSHE topics
- Provide input into the RSHE curriculum based on safeguarding concerns

9.6 The SENDCO

The SENCO will:

- Work with the RSHE lead to ensure the curriculum is accessible for all pupils with SEND
- Advise on adaptations and reasonable adjustments for individual pupils
- Ensure RSHE is linked to pupils' EHC plans and support plans where appropriate
- Provide training and support to staff on adapting RSHE for pupils with SEND
- Work with external specialists (e.g., QTVIs, speech and language therapists) to support RSHE delivery
- Monitor the impact of RSHE on pupils with SEND

9.7 Pupils

- Engage with RSHE lessons respectfully
- Follow ground rules
- Respect the views and experiences of others
- Ask questions when they need clarification
- Report any concerns to a trusted adult

9.8 Parents

The parent community at our school will follow the responsibilities set out in the Home School Agreement

10. Parents' right to withdraw

What Parents Can and Cannot Withdraw From

Parents CAN request withdrawal from:

Sex education (except content in the science curriculum)

Parents CANNOT withdraw from:

- Relationships education (statutory)
- Health education (statutory)
- Science curriculum content on reproduction

What is Covered by the Right to Withdraw

The right to withdraw applies to sex education content including:

- How babies are conceived through sexual intercourse
- Sexual relationships and sexual activity
- Contraception
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Sexual health services

The right to withdraw does NOT apply to:

- Teaching about families, friendships, and relationships (relationships education)
- Teaching about puberty and the changing body (health education)
- Teaching about reproduction in science lessons
- Teaching about online safety, including sexual content online
- Teaching about consent, boundaries, and keeping safe from abuse

How to Request Withdrawal

Parents who wish to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education should:

1. Contact the Headteacher to discuss their concerns
2. Attend a meeting to discuss:

- What will be taught and when
- The reasons for teaching this content
- The benefits of their child receiving this education
- The implications of withdrawal
- Alternative arrangements

3. Put the request in writing if they still wish to withdraw after the meeting

Contact details: Headteacher: David Swanston Email: davids@stvin.com Phone: 01512289968

The School's Response

When a parent requests withdrawal, we will:

- Arrange a meeting with the principal (and RSHE lead if appropriate)
- Listen to parents' concerns respectfully
- Explain what will be taught and why
- Show parents the materials we will use
- Explain the benefits of the education
- Discuss the implications of withdrawal
- Try to reach an agreement that respects parents' wishes while ensuring the child receives important education

The principal will document the discussion and decision.

If Withdrawal is Granted

If the principal agrees to the withdrawal request:

- The withdrawal will be recorded
- The pupil will be withdrawn from the specified sex education lessons only
- The pupil will be provided with appropriate alternative work during these lessons
- The pupil will continue to receive relationships education and health education
- The pupil will continue to receive science curriculum content on reproduction
- The arrangement will be reviewed annually or if circumstances change

Alternative Arrangements

When a pupil is withdrawn from sex education:

- They will be supervised by a member of staff
- They will be given appropriate work to complete
- They will not be made to feel different or excluded
- They will rejoin their class for relationships education and health education

Pupils' Right to opt Back In

Pupils can opt back in from three terms before they turn 16.

If a pupil wishes to receive sex education despite their parents' withdrawal request:

- The pupil should speak to the principal or RSHE lead
- The school will arrange for the pupil to receive sex education from three terms before they turn 16
- The school will inform parents that the pupil has opted back in
- The school will provide any catch-up education the pupil needs

Answering Questions from Withdrawn Pupils

Pupils may ask questions about topics in sex education that the school does not cover (in primary) or that relates to sex education from which the child has been withdrawn.

When this happens, teachers will:

- Acknowledge the question
- Explain that the pupil has been withdrawn from this content
- Suggest the pupil speaks to their parents about the question
- Offer to signpost the pupil to appropriate external support services if needed (with parental knowledge where appropriate)
- Consider whether the question indicates a safeguarding concern

We recognise that children whose questions go unanswered might instead turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online, and we balance this with respecting parental rights.

Exceptional Circumstances

In exceptional circumstances, the headteacher may refuse a withdrawal request if:

- The pupil is at immediate risk and needs the education for their safety
- There are safeguarding concerns that mean the pupil needs this education
- The pupil is approaching 16 and needs the information for their wellbeing

This would be a rare decision made in consultation with safeguarding professionals and documented carefully.

11. Training

11.1 Training Requirements

All staff teaching RSHE will receive:

Initial training:

- Induction training when they start teaching RSHE
- Overview of this policy and the statutory requirements
- Training on safeguarding in the context of RSHE
- Training on adapting RSHE for pupils with SEND
- Training on answering difficult questions
- Training on handling disclosures

Ongoing training:

- Annual refresher training on RSHE
- Updates when the curriculum or policy changes
- Training on emerging issues (e.g., new online threats)
- Training on specific topics as needed (e.g., teaching about consent, teaching about gender identity)

Staff may receive additional training on specific topics (e.g., supporting pupils with trauma, teaching about sexual violence)

11.2 Training Content

- Training will cover
- Statutory requirements
- Curriculum content
- Pedagogy

- Safeguarding
- Inclusion
- Personal development

11.3 Training is provided by:

- The RSHE lead
- The SENCO
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead
- External specialists (e.g., school nurse, sexual health services, safeguarding trainers)
- Online training providers (e.g., DfE training modules)

11.4 Support for Staff

We support staff teaching RSHE by:

- Providing detailed lesson plans and resources
- Allowing staff to observe experienced colleagues
- Creating a supportive culture where staff can ask for help
- Allowing staff to consult with the RSHE lead before lessons
- Providing access to specialist support (e.g., HCC, SENDCO)
- Recognising that some topics may be difficult for staff with personal experiences
- Allowing staff to opt out of teaching specific topics if they have personal reasons (with alternative arrangements made)

11.5 Staff Wellbeing

We recognise that teaching RSHE can be emotionally demanding, particularly when:

- Pupils make disclosures of abuse
- Topics relate to staff members' own experiences
- Dealing with difficult questions or challenging behaviour
- Supporting pupils who are vulnerable or distressed

We support staff wellbeing by:

- Providing supervision and debrief opportunities
- Ensuring staff know where to get support
- Recognising the emotional labour involved in teaching RSHE
- Providing access to employee assistance programmes
- Creating a culture where staff can talk about difficulties
- Ensuring workload is manageable

11.6 Training Records

We maintain records of:

- Who has received RSHE training and when
- What training has been delivered
- Any gaps in training that need to be addressed
- Staff feedback on training
- Impact of training on practice

Training records are kept on file in Central records held in the main office.

12. Safeguarding and Handling Disclosures

12.1 The Link Between RSHE and Safeguarding

Discussions about sensitive topics in RSHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff should know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused.

RSHE lessons may lead to pupils:

- Disclosing abuse or exploitation
- Asking questions that indicate they're at risk
- Showing concerning knowledge or behaviour
- Reporting concerns about peers

This is a positive outcome - it shows pupils feel safe to disclose and know how to ask for help.

12.2 Staff Responsibilities

All staff teaching RSHE must:

- Be alert to signs that a pupil may be at risk
- Know how to respond to disclosures
- Follow the school's safeguarding procedures
- Never promise confidentiality to a pupil
- Report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately

Staff should handle personal information with due care and know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or officer).

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

12.3 Explaining Confidentiality to Pupils

At the start of each RSHE unit, staff will explain to pupils:

What we will keep confidential:

- General questions and discussions in class
- Personal opinions and views shared in lessons
- Anonymous questions in the question box

What we cannot keep confidential:

- If we're worried that a pupil or someone they know is being hurt or is at risk
- If we're worried about a pupil's safety
- If a pupil tells us about abuse, exploitation, or serious harm

What will happen if a pupil makes a disclosure:

- We will listen and take them seriously
- We will tell them we need to share the information to keep them safe
- We will pass the information to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The DSL will decide what action to take (which may include contacting parents and/or external agencies)
- The pupil will be kept informed (where appropriate) about what's happening
- The pupil will be supported throughout

It is equally important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report, about themselves or a peer.

How to Respond to a Disclosure

If a pupil makes a disclosure during an RSHE lesson, staff should:

DO:

- Listen carefully and take the pupil seriously
- Stay calm and reassuring
- Tell the pupil they've done the right thing by telling you
- Explain that you need to share the information to keep them safe
- Write down what the pupil says using their words (as soon as possible)
- Report to the DSL immediately (same day)
- Follow up to ensure the pupil is getting support

DON'T:

- Promise confidentiality
- Ask leading questions or investigate
- Express shock or disbelief
- Make promises you can't keep
- Delay reporting the concern
- Discuss the disclosure with anyone except the DSL (unless they're unavailable, in which case speak to a DSO)

12.4 Role of the Designated Safeguarding Lead

The DSL will:

- Receive reports from staff promptly
- Assess the level of risk
- Decide what action to take in line with safeguarding procedures
- Contact parents (unless this would put the child at greater risk)
- Make referrals to children's social care or police if needed
- Ensure the pupil receives appropriate support
- Keep records in line with safeguarding procedures
- Monitor ongoing concerns

The Designated Safeguarding Lead is David Swanston

Designated Safeguarding Officers are Matthew Morris and Norah Warburton

12.5 Supporting Pupils After a Disclosure

After a disclosure, we will:

- Ensure the pupil has a trusted adult they can talk to
- Provide appropriate pastoral support
- Consider whether additional RSHE or support is needed
- Work with external agencies as appropriate
- Keep the pupil informed (where appropriate) about what's happening
- Monitor the pupil's wellbeing
- Respect the pupil's privacy (information shared on a need-to-know basis only)

12.6 Mandatory Reporting Duties

Staff should also be aware of mandatory reporting duties, including relating to FGM, and that virginity testing and hymenoplasty became illegal in 2022.

The Government is also introducing a new law which will create a legal requirement for anyone in regulated activity relating to children in England, including teachers, to report if they are made aware a child is being sexually abused.

12.7 Working with External Agencies

Where RSHE lessons are delivered by external agencies, schools must agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor.

External visitors must:

- Understand our safeguarding procedures
- Know who the DSL is and how to contact them
- Understand confidentiality and when they must share information
- Report any concerns immediately

13. Answering Pupil Questions

Teachers will answer questions:

- Honestly - giving accurate, age-appropriate information
- Sensitively - being aware of pupils' different backgrounds and experiences
- Appropriately - considering the age and developmental stage of pupils
- Inclusively - using language that includes all pupils
- Factually - distinguishing between facts and opinions

We recognise that:

- Children whose questions go unanswered might instead turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online
- It's important to support the child while respecting parental rights
- Some questions may indicate safeguarding concerns that need to be reported

Signposting to support:

If appropriate, we may signpost pupils to:

- Childline: 0800 1111 (confidential helpline for children)
- NSPCC: 0808 800 5000
- Brook: www.brook.org.uk (sexual health and wellbeing for under 25s)
- The Mix: www.themix.org.uk (support for under 25s)
- Kooth: www.kooth.com (online mental health support)
- Shout: Text 85258 (24/7 text support)
- Local sexual health services:

Inappropriate Questions

If a pupil asks an inappropriate question (e.g., asking for personal information about a teacher or another pupil), the teacher will:

- Remind pupils of the ground rules
- Explain why the question is not appropriate
- Redirect the conversation
- Consider whether the question indicates a concern that needs to be followed up

Questions That Indicate Safeguarding Concerns

Some questions may indicate that a pupil:

- Has been exposed to inappropriate content
- Is being abused or exploited
- Is at risk of harm
- Has concerning knowledge for their age

Examples of concerning questions:

- Questions that show detailed knowledge of sexual activity inappropriate for their age
- Questions about specific abusive situations
- Questions that suggest they or someone they know is being harmed
- Questions about illegal activities

If a question raises safeguarding concerns, the teacher will:

- Respond calmly and appropriately in the moment
- Not investigate or ask leading questions
- Speak to the pupil privately after the lesson if appropriate
- Report the concern to the DSL immediately
- Record the question and context accurately

Supporting Staff to Answer Questions

- We support staff to answer questions confidently by:
- Providing training on answering difficult questions
- Creating a bank of example questions and model answers
- Allowing staff to say "I don't know, but I'll find out"
- Encouraging staff to consult with the RSHE lead if unsure
- Providing access to accurate, up-to-date resources
- Creating a supportive culture where staff can ask for help

14. Monitoring arrangements

We monitor the quality of RSHE teaching through:

Lesson observations:

- Regular observations of RSHE lessons by the RSHE lead and/or senior leaders
- Focus on creating a safe environment, adapting for SEND, handling questions, safeguarding awareness

Learning walks:

- Informal visits to RSHE lessons
- Conversations with pupils about their learning
- Checking that resources are accessible

Work scrutiny:

- Reviewing pupils' work from RSHE lessons
- Checking that learning is appropriate and differentiated

Planning scrutiny:

- Reviewing lesson plans and schemes of work
- Ensuring coverage of statutory content
- Checking that adaptations are planned for pupils with SEND

Staff feedback:

- Regular discussions with staff about RSHE
- Staff surveys about confidence and support needs
- Sharing good practice

Evaluating Impact on Pupils

We evaluate the impact of RSHE on pupils through:

Pupil voice:

- Pupil surveys about RSHE annually
- School council discussions about RSHE
- Individual conversations with pupils
- Pupil feedback after lessons

Assessment:

- Pre- and post-unit assessments (adapted for pupils' needs)
- Observation of pupils applying learning in real situations
- Pupil work and reflections

Outcomes data:

- Safeguarding data (noting that increased reporting may indicate pupils feel safe to disclose)
- Bullying and behaviour data
- Attendance and wellbeing data
- Progression data (e.g., pupils accessing further education, employment, independent living)

Stakeholder feedback:

- Parent surveys and feedback
- Staff observations of pupils' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviour
- Feedback from external partners (e.g., school nurse, sexual health services)

Monitoring Compliance

We monitor compliance with statutory requirements by:

- Annual review of this policy
- Annual review of the curriculum map
- Checking that all statutory content is covered
- Ensuring staff are trained
- Ensuring materials are accessible
- Ensuring parents are consulted
- Ensuring safeguarding procedures are followed

The RSHE lead is responsible for monitoring compliance and reporting to the principal and governors.

Reporting to Governors

The RSHE lead will report to governors annually on:

- Implementation of the RSHE curriculum
- Quality of teaching
- Impact on pupils
- Safeguarding issues arising from RSHE
- Staff training and support
- Parent engagement and feedback

- Any concerns or areas for development
- Plans for the coming year

Reporting to Governors

The RSHE lead will report to governors annually on:

- Implementation of the RSHE curriculum
- Quality of teaching
- Impact on pupils
- Safeguarding issues arising from RSHE
- Staff training and support
- Parent engagement and feedback
- Any concerns or areas for development
- Plans for the coming year

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed:

Annually as a minimum, sooner if:

- There are changes to statutory guidance (including publication of guidance on gender questioning children)
- There are significant changes to the curriculum
- Safeguarding concerns indicate the policy needs updating
- Feedback from stakeholders indicates changes are needed
- Ofsted or other inspections identify areas for improvement

Links with Other Policies

This RSHE policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Safeguarding and wellbeing:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Curriculum:

- SEND Policy
- SEND Information Report
- Curriculum Policy
- Science Policy
- Computing Policy
- Assessment Policy

Inclusion and equality:

- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Accessibility Plan
- Pupil Premium Strategy

Other:

- Staff Code of Conduct

Appendix 1: Curriculum map

Relationships and sex education Learning Outcomes – year group.

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
Key Stage 1	Pupils should be taught: - To recognise and compare the differences and similarities between people. - To understand that family and friends can provide love, care, and support. - To identify the characteristics of healthy friendships. - To understand the concept of personal boundaries and privacy (including understanding private body parts). - To recognise that people may have different types of families. - To identify who they can talk to if they are worried or need help.
Key Stage 2	Pupils should be taught: - About the diversity of families and that family life can include a range of arrangements. - The characteristics of healthy friendships and the importance of respecting others. - The concept of consent in age-appropriate terms (e.g., asking permission, saying no). - About the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty, and strategies for managing them. - The basics of human reproduction (how babies are conceived and born). - How to seek help and advice from trusted adults if they are worried about relationships or safety.

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS
Key Stage 3	Pupils should be taught: • About healthy, respectful relationships, including friendships, family, and romantic relationships. • The concept of consent and the legal age for sexual activity. • About the physical, emotional, and social aspects of puberty and sexual development. • About different sexual orientations and gender identities, promoting equality and respect. • How to manage risk in relationships, including online interactions. • About contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and sexual health services.
Key Stage 4	Pupils should be taught: • To develop knowledge, skills, and strategies to maintain healthy relationships and personal safety. • About the legal framework regarding consent, sexual offences, exploitation, and harassment. • To make informed choices about sexual activity and relationships, including contraception and STI prevention. • About long-term relationships, parenting, and the qualities of healthy partnerships. • To recognise and respond to unhealthy or abusive relationships, including domestic abuse and coercive control. • To access appropriate support and services for sexual health, emotional wellbeing, and safety.
Notes	St Vincent's will teach RSE content in a way that is age-appropriate and inclusive, covering both statutory requirements and additional PSHE Association guidance where possible. Schools will include broader PSHE topics alongside statutory RSE, such as digital safety, emotional wellbeing, and financial education.

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 because they can give 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 other children's families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their own, but they should respect those differences and know that other 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 2 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 • The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trust and trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy, caring and kind 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 • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened • About managing conflict with kindness and respect, and that violence is never right • How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful, kind relationships	• The importance of respecting others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we can balance the needs and wishes of different people, and why this can be complicated • The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in all relationships with friends, family, peers and adults • How to communicate effectively: how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries and manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration • That they can expect to be treated with respect and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example: physically, in character, personality or background), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs • The practical steps they can take 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. They should have opportunities to consider issues like self-esteem and building a sense of their own identity • Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs. • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online safety and awareness	• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not and/or pretending to be a child • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • That there is a minimum age for joining most social media sites which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe content with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults • That it's important to be cautious about sharing any information about themselves online, and how to use privacy and location settings to protect their information online • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online, including where pictures or words might be circulated • 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 • 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	• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources for example • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults, including that it's not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) including those they do/don't know • How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust • How to report concerns or abuse, 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 • Where to get advice, for example from their family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children • Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony • That 'common-law marriage' is a myth, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children • That forced marriage and marriage before the age of 18 are illegal • How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships. • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development. • How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• About the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships • How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal • The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others • What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs • The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict • The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration • The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care and attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says 'yes' to doing something that doesn't automatically make it ethically okay • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice • How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others • How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others • How some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called 'involuntary celibates' (incels) or online influencers
Online safety and awareness	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material they provide provides to another has the potential to be shared and circulated online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. They should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues • Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images • About the characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and/or may post things which aren't real or have been created with AI. They should also know that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime (even if the photo is of themselves or someone who has consented, and even if the photo was created by that child and/or using AI). That there are potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating these images. That sharing indecent images of people over 18 without their consent is also a crime
	• How to seek support. They should also understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared
	• What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online
	• About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them
	• That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons
	• Where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamourise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong
	• That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice
	• How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns
	• That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. That this can affect people who see pornographic content accidentally, as well as those who see it deliberately. That pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it
	• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
	• That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (for example, to enable targeted advertising)
	• That criminals can operate online scams, such as using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion
	• That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. That it is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW

Being safe	• How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent
	
	• That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others
	
	• How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed
	
	• How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. About ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. That there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. About the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and they should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions
	
	• What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it
	
	• That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language, attention or touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting
	
	• About concepts and laws relating to:
	    ○ Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault
	    ○ Harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language
	    ○ Domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour
	    ○ Harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation
	    ○ Forced marriage
	    ○ Female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty
	
	• That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed
	
	• That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	• That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death • That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful • How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour, or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive • The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex • About sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might consider prior to sexual activity, such as the law, their faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • That some sexual behaviours can be harmful • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) • About the use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma • About the prevalence of STIs, the short and long-term impact they can have on those who contract them, and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour • How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms • How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent/carer form requesting their child's withdrawal from sex education within RSE.

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

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