



# **Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy 2026–27**

**Reviewed by:** Assistant Headteacher Abigail Woodcock and PSHE Leads Melissa Archer and David Charlesworth

**Review date:** September 2026

**Next review:** September 2027

## 1. Aims

At Rhyddings, Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) forms an important part of our wider Personal Development provision.

Our aim is to provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to develop healthy and respectful relationships, make informed decisions, understand themselves and others, keep themselves safe and prepare successfully for adult life.

Our RSHE curriculum aims to:

- provide a safe framework in which sensitive discussions can take place;
- help pupils understand healthy friendships, families and intimate relationships;
- develop pupils' understanding of consent, boundaries, respect and personal responsibility;
- prepare pupils for puberty, sexual development and adulthood;
- provide accurate, age-appropriate information about sexual and reproductive health;
- develop pupils' self-respect, confidence, empathy and resilience;
- help pupils recognise unhealthy, coercive, abusive or exploitative relationships;
- support pupils to keep themselves and others safe, including online;
- help prevent child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour;
- challenge prejudice, discrimination and harmful stereotypes;
- ensure pupils understand relevant law and their rights and responsibilities; and
- ensure pupils know how and where to seek help.

Our approach is **planned, progressive and connected**, building pupils' knowledge and understanding as they move through school.

## 2. Statutory Requirements

Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory for pupils receiving secondary education and Health Education is compulsory in state-funded secondary schools.

Rhyddings has regard to the Department for Education's **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance**, revised in July 2025 and in force from **1 September 2026**.

RSHE is primarily delivered through our timetabled PSHE curriculum and is supported through the wider Personal Development curriculum, safeguarding education, assemblies, form time, curriculum subjects, careers education and pastoral provision where appropriate.

RSHE is taught through weekly PSHE lessons across Years 7–11.

### 3. Curriculum Content

RSHE is taught through a planned and progressive curriculum across Years 7–11. Content is sequenced so that pupils revisit important concepts at increasing levels of depth and complexity as they mature.

Teaching includes, where age and developmentally appropriate:

- families and different types of committed relationships;
- friendships and respectful relationships;
- healthy and unhealthy relationships;
- consent and personal boundaries;
- coercive and controlling behaviour;
- domestic abuse;
- sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour;
- recognising grooming, exploitation and abuse;
- stereotypes, sexism, misogyny and prejudice;
- equality, diversity and protected characteristics;
- sexual orientation;
- biological sex and gender reassignment;
- online relationships and online safety;
- sharing intimate images and the law;
- AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes;
- pornography and its potential impact on expectations, attitudes and relationships;
- harmful online content and potentially harmful online influences;
- contraception and pregnancy prevention;
- pregnancy choices;
- sexually transmitted infections, including HIV;
- testing, treatment, PrEP and PEP where appropriate;
- reproductive health and fertility;
- puberty and sexual development;
- emotional wellbeing and resilience;
- relevant law, including the age of consent; and
- accessing appropriate support and health services.

Content is taught factually, sensitively and in an age and developmentally appropriate manner.

Where topics are subject to significant public or political debate, staff distinguish clearly between **established facts and law** and contested views or beliefs. Pupils are encouraged to discuss issues respectfully without presenting contested positions as established fact.

Our curriculum promotes respect for all pupils and complies with our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

#### **4. Curriculum Delivery**

RSHE is primarily delivered through weekly PSHE lessons across Years 7–11.

PSHE is led by **Melissa Archer and David Charlesworth**, line managed by **Assistant Headteacher Abigail Woodcock**, and taught by a range of experienced teachers.

Teaching is planned sequentially so that knowledge and skills build over time. Teachers make appropriate links to pupils' previous learning and assess understanding to identify misconceptions or areas requiring further teaching.

Sensitive topics are taught using appropriate strategies including:

- agreed classroom expectations;
- distancing techniques;
- appropriate scenarios and case studies;
- anonymous question opportunities;
- factual and age-appropriate resources; and
- clear signposting to support.

Staff do not promise confidentiality. Where a pupil makes a disclosure or raises a safeguarding concern, staff follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

#### **5. Managing Questions**

Rhyddings recognises that effective RSHE may lead pupils to ask sensitive or challenging questions.

Staff answer questions honestly, factually and in an age and developmentally appropriate way.

Teachers will not answer questions that are inappropriate for the age or developmental stage of the pupils. Where appropriate, a pupil may be offered an opportunity to discuss a question individually or be directed to an appropriate source of information or support.

Where a question raises a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

## **6. External Agencies and Visitors**

External agencies may support RSHE where their expertise adds value to pupils' learning.

Rhyddings remains responsible for the curriculum and for the content delivered to pupils.

Before an external organisation or visitor delivers RSHE content, the school will consider their suitability and review relevant resources and intended content.

External provision must:

- support the school's planned curriculum;
- be accurate and appropriate;
- be suitable for pupils' age and developmental stage;
- comply with safeguarding expectations;
- be accessible to pupils with SEND;
- support equality and respectful discussion; and
- comply with the school's RSHE policy and statutory responsibilities.

## **7. SEND, Inclusion and Accessibility**

RSHE is an entitlement for all pupils.

Teaching is adapted where appropriate to ensure pupils with SEND can access and understand essential knowledge.

Adaptations may include changes to language, resources, examples, pace, repetition or teaching approaches. Adaptation should support access without unnecessarily removing essential safeguarding knowledge.

Particular consideration is given to pupils who may be more vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, coercion, harmful sexual behaviour, bullying or online harm.

Staff maintain high expectations while providing appropriate support so that all pupils are prepared for adulthood and understand how to keep themselves and others safe.

## **8. Equality and Respect**

Rhyddings is committed to providing RSHE that promotes dignity, respect and equality.

Teaching reflects the society in which pupils are growing up and helps pupils understand the importance of respecting people who may be different from themselves.

RSHE addresses relevant protected characteristics and helps pupils understand discrimination, prejudice and their responsibilities towards others.

Staff challenge discriminatory language, sexism, misogyny, homophobia and other forms of prejudice in accordance with school policies and safeguarding procedures.

## **9. Parents and Carers**

We recognise parents and carers as important partners in RSHE.

Rhyddings will communicate with parents and carers about the curriculum and consult appropriately when this policy is developed or reviewed.

### **Parents and carers can request to review the materials used to teach RSHE.**

The school will provide appropriate opportunities for parents and carers to understand what is being taught and to view curriculum materials, including representative examples of resources.

Where resources are protected by copyright, appropriate arrangements will be made to enable parents and carers to view them without breaching copyright restrictions.

## **10. Right to Request Withdrawal**

Parents and carers **cannot withdraw pupils from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory science content.**

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of **sex education delivered as part of RSE**, other than content taught through the statutory science curriculum.

Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will normally discuss the request with the parent/carer and, where appropriate, the pupil. This provides an opportunity to clarify what is taught, the purpose of the curriculum and the potential implications of withdrawal.

In secondary education, a request may be refused in **exceptional circumstances**, for example where there are safeguarding concerns or particular vulnerabilities relating to the pupil.

Any decision and discussion will be appropriately recorded.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide purposeful alternative education.

From **three terms before the pupil turns 16**, the pupil may choose to receive sex education despite a parental request for withdrawal. Where this occurs, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to receive the teaching.

## 11. Safeguarding

RSHE is an important part of Rhyddings' approach to safeguarding.

Through RSHE, pupils develop knowledge that can help them recognise unsafe situations, inappropriate behaviour, exploitation, abuse and unhealthy relationships.

RSHE works alongside the school's wider safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, online safety, attendance, pastoral and Personal Development provision.

Teachers are aware that sensitive teaching may lead to disclosures. Any safeguarding concern or disclosure will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Pupils are regularly reminded of trusted adults and appropriate sources of support.

## 12. Roles and Responsibilities

**The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team** are responsible for ensuring that RSHE meets statutory requirements and is appropriately implemented across the school.

**The Assistant Headteacher responsible for Personal Development** oversees the strategic development and quality assurance of RSHE.

**PSHE Leads Melissa Archer and David Charlesworth** are responsible for curriculum planning, sequencing, resources and supporting consistent delivery.

**Teachers delivering PSHE/RSHE** are responsible for delivering the curriculum sensitively and effectively, adapting teaching appropriately and following safeguarding procedures.

All staff have a wider responsibility to model respectful relationships, challenge inappropriate behaviour and contribute to a safe and respectful school culture.

## 13. Monitoring, Evaluation and Quality Assurance

The quality and impact of RSHE is monitored through a range of approaches which may include:

- curriculum reviews;
- lesson visits;
- work scrutiny;
- pupil voice;
- staff voice;
- assessment and retrieval;
- review of curriculum sequencing;

- safeguarding information and emerging pupil needs; and
- feedback from parents and carers where appropriate.

Monitoring focuses not only on whether content has been delivered, but on whether pupils **know, understand and can apply** important knowledge.

Curriculum content may be adapted in response to identified needs, safeguarding trends, pupil voice, statutory changes or emerging risks.

#### **14. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where statutory guidance or school provision changes.

The policy will be made available to parents and carers and published in accordance with statutory requirements.

**Next review: September 2027**