



Dorney School
Relationship Education
(RSE) Policy
2026-27

Respect Collaborate Grow

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1 Introduction and aims

Schools play a crucial role in preventative education.

Preventative education is most effective in the context of a whole-school approach that prepares pupils and students for life in modern Britain and creates a culture of zero tolerance for racism, sexism, misogyny/misandry, homo/bi/trans phobia and sexual violence/harassment.

Scope

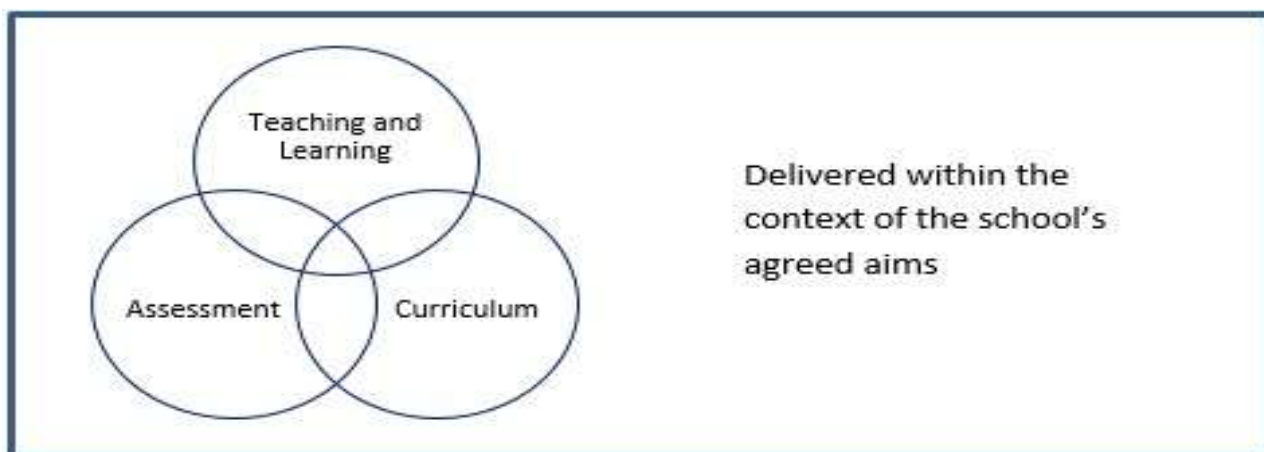
This policy applies to all students, including those in the Early Years.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that our Relationships Education supports our school ethos and fulfils our school aims, which are defined as:

Through our whole school PSHE Curriculum we aim to teach:

- the skills needed for successful relationships.
- a moral framework that will guide their decisions and behaviours.
- an understanding of their own bodies.
- the confidence and know-how to seek help and advice.
- raise pupils' self-esteem, self-awareness and confidence.
- an awareness of the right they have over their own body;
- the ability to respect the rights of others to hold opinions that differ from their own as long as these views do not impact on the rights of anyone else.
- the ability to take responsibility for, and accept the consequences of, their own actions.
- the knowledge to reduce the risks to their own health and the health of others.



1.1 This policy forms part of the curriculum.

1.2 We see the curriculum as, 'The total learning experience for our students, which includes not only the taught lessons but also the routines, behaviours, events, activities and other opportunities that our students experience on a daily, weekly and yearly basis in order to ensure that all of them make the best progress possible and attain high standards'.

- 1.3 A well-structured and coherent curriculum is a fundamental element of the tripartite education that underpins all successful schools and includes Teaching, Learning and Assessment (see model below) and is underpinned by Wellbeing.

Aims

The aims of RSE at our school are to:

- 1.4 Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- 1.5 Prepare students for puberty, give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- 1.6 Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- 1.7 Create a positive culture around sexuality and relationships.
- 1.8 Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- 1.9 Help students understand that healthy relationships are an important part of wellbeing.
- 1.10 Prevent students from becoming involved in child-on-child abuse, and /or experiencing harm in school/in the community

2 Statutory requirements

Relationships education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, and relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

The government RSHE guidance to be implemented on 1st September 2026 can be found [here](#). Until 31st August 2026, this policy will be underpinned and informed by the current 2025 guidance which can be found [here](#).

Our policy also follows the statutory guidance given by the government (DfE) and meets the requirements of the Independent School Standards. Aspects of RSE are infused within the day-to-day operation of our school; incorporated through the curriculum, both in content included in subject schemes of work and through other planned learning opportunities in the school. They are captured in our written aims and expressed in the ethos and behaviours of everyone.

- 2.1 As a school and an early years' provision we must ensure that every registered student who is provided with primary education at the school is provided with relationships education, in accordance with section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Independent School Standards

3 Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – The PSHE Lead reviewed all relevant information, including but not limited to, relevant national and local guidance including regard to the school's obligations under the Human Rights Act 1998, the Equality Act 2010, (including the Public Sector Equality Duty), and their local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- The policy was drafted in accordance with statutory guidance and aligned with the Independent School Regulations/BSO Standards. The school curriculum plans were amended accordingly.
- Staff consultation – school staff were given the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties are invited to complete a questionnaire.

The school will proactively engage parents and make sure they are aware of what is being taught in RSE and consult with them when developing and reviewing the RSE Policy. The school will show parents a representative sample of the resources that they plan to use, enabling parents to continue conversations started in class, and should ensure that parents are able to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSE on request.

- Student consultation – The RSE curriculum is embedded into our ethos and in our day-to-day provision. There are opportunities for the voice of the child to be heard during PSHE circle time activities.
- Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy will be published.
- Policy review – this policy will be reviewed every three years.

4 Definition

- 4.1 RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about healthy relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity where appropriate.
- 4.2 RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.
- 4.3 RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity, sexual orientation, or a specific sexual identity.

5 Curriculum

- 5.1 Our curriculum will be taught through a DfE approved scheme of learning, but we may need to adapt this as and when necessary.
- 5.2 We develop the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs, and feelings of students.

5.3 Primary RSE will focus on:

- Healthy bodies
- Being me and my world
- Celebrating difference
- Dreams and goals
- Healthy me
- Relationships
- Changing me

It will:

- i. consider the ages, aptitudes and needs of all pupils, including those pupils with SEND/ and an EHC plan.
- ii. not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs; and
- iii. ensure that discriminatory, extremist opinions or behaviours are challenged as a matter of routine

5.4 For more information about our curriculum, do take a look at the school website.

6 Delivery of RSE

Equality

The school, in its delivery of RSE will comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (s.149). Topics will be taught in a way which does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment. Pupils will be encouraged to understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics (by the end of their secondary education). The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sex.

Responding to new risks or issues within the national or local context

The school will carefully sequence teaching so that pupils are supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harms. The school will maintain a relevant and responsive curriculum to ensure that any particular or new issues that are affecting the pupils in the school (or nationally) are addressed in a timely manner so that the children are kept as safe as possible on/offline. Where appropriate, the school will work with local partners and other bodies to understand specific local issues/risks. The school inform parents in advance of any deviation from our published RSE policy, including the reasons why they are covering this content, and will share any relevant materials with them on request in advance of the planned sessions. All teaching will be age appropriate and respectful of all children, including those who may have no familiarity with the topics under discussion.

Our RSE is taught as part of our PSHE curriculum. The PSHE course is delivered to all students through discrete PSHE lessons taught by our teachers. Elements of the programme may be supported through the bringing in of additional expertise, such as outside speakers, trained health professionals, or the use of teachers with a particular

interest or knowledge in a specific area. In addition to these discrete sessions, PSHE is also embedded within the curriculum (e.g. social issues through the sharing stories; Health through physical development; Citizenship through our school and wider community). There are also centrally organised sessions which supplement the delivery in house.

Relationships Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

Health topics will include:

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic First Aid
- Developing bodies

6.1 For more information about our RSE curriculum, please see the school website.

6.2 For more information about our PSHE curriculum, please see the school website.

6.3 These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

The school will also adhere to any statutory guidance on teaching topics where there is significant debate, such as gender questioning/reassignment: we will be mindful that beyond the facts and the laws lie varying viewpoints. As such, the school will not endorse any particular view or teach it as fact that all people have a gender identity. The school will avoid language and activities which repeat or enforce gender stereotypes and will be mindful to avoid any suggestion that social transition is a simple solution to feelings of distress or discomfort.

7 Roles and responsibilities

Staff & Governance

7.1 PSHE Lead Teacher

The people with responsibility for the overview and yearly evaluation of this policy, are PSHE subject leaders and the senior leadership team. However, all staff are responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented and acted on.

When evaluating the use and impact of this policy, our school leaders will evaluate the extent to which there is evidence of a curriculum which:

- Fulfils the aims of the school;
- Embeds aspiration, attributes and the expectation to achieve high standards and high rates of progress; and
- Provides engagement and excitement for learning.

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSE.

7.3 The Chair of Governors

The Chair of Governors will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Chair of Governors will ensure that:

- all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes
- the subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned
- the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND (see below)
- Teaching is sensitive to the needs of all students with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- clear information is provided for parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn; and,
- the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school can fulfil its legal obligations.

7.4 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students; and
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE.

8 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

8.1 Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Our curriculum is inclusive and our RSE and Health Education is accessible for all students. For those pupils with special educational needs or specific learning difficulties, the school has a well-established Learning Support team, led by the SENCO. Further details of this provision can be found in our Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy.

High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.

As set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND, Dorney School is mindful of preparing students for adulthood.

Our school is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors will be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.

9 Parents' right to withdraw

- 9.1 If parents require more information on RSE for primary aged children, this is a useful information source of information for them:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812593/RSE_primary_schools_guide_for_parents.pdf

- 9.2 **Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

10 Training

- 10.1 Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development programme. We also use the resources available from the PSHE Association.
- 10.2 The Headteacher will also invite, following a due diligence and vetting process, visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11 Monitoring and evaluation arrangements

- 11.1 The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Head Teacher through:
Monitoring arrangements, such as work scrutiny, lesson observations learning walks
etc
- 11.2 Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our
internal
assessment systems.
- 11.3 Evaluation
The delivery of RSE is evaluated by the Head Teacher and the PSHE subject leader.

12 Safeguarding

RSE discussions can lead to increased safeguarding concerns being raised by pupils.
All staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if they have concerns
about pupil wellbeing or safety.

Confidentiality arrangements must be clearly explained to pupils prior to session