

PSHE AND RSE POLICY FOR ST. MARGARET'S CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL



At St. Margaret's Church of England Primary School we seek to develop wisdom, encourage aspiration and promote dignity and acceptance enabling our respectful children to live a life giving back to the community.

John 10:10: 'Live life in all its fullness.'

Aspiration

Wisdom

Endurance

Consulted with parents	Autumn 2026
Approved by the governing body on:	Autumn 2026
Shared with stakeholders on:	Autumn 2026
Next review:	Autumn 2027

Introduction

Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will also support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right. (Department for Education, July 2025, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers).

Maintained schools and academies are required to provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced in accordance with Section 78 of the Education Act 2002. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, a PSHE curriculum:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society, and
- Prepares pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. They also make health education compulsory in all schools except independent schools. This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Our school PSHE policy refers to both PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) and RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) because RSHE is included within PSHE. Our PSHE programme offers a broader range of content than RSHE alone, including citizenship education, finance education, age-appropriate careers education etc.

Aim of the PSHE policy

To provide pupils with the knowledge and skills they need in order to reach their potential as individuals and within society. This education also helps them explore their own and others' attitudes and values within the local, national and global community.

In participating in PSHE learning, pupils recognise their own worth, the value of others and reflect on the multitude of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues they will face as young adults and beyond.

They also learn to understand and respect diversity, the rule of law, and learn ways to identify and manage risk.

In our school we choose to deliver Personal, Social, Health Education by adapting resources from government aligned programmes such as Kapow, No Outsiders and the PSHE Association.

Objectives of the policy:

This policy will support the development of the skills, attitudes, values and behaviour, which enable pupils to:

- Stay safe in the on and off-line world
- Remain physically healthy and seek appropriate support to do so
- Remain emotionally healthy and seek appropriate support if they are worried about their mental health
- Form and maintain healthy and safe relationships
- Identify and manage risk
- Live and work with others
- Be active citizens
- Understand their own and others' values, rights and responsibilities
- Consider their aspirations and develop resilience for life challenges ahead
- Live in a democratic society
- Develop personal skills such as effective communication, assertiveness, budgeting and wider life-skills

Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Definition of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

Relationships and Health Education is compulsory for all primary schools as set out in the DfE Guidance (2025). Primary schools have the right to provide additional age-appropriate sex education outside of this guidance, which we choose to do as a school, at an age-appropriate level, for our Year 6 children. Parents and carers of children in Year 6 may exercise their right to withdraw their child from the following sex education elements of RSHE:

- Identify the links between love, committed relationships/marriage and conception
- Correctly name male and female body parts associated with conception
- Identify how the sex parts relate to how a baby is made
- *Explain that a baby is made when a sperm (male) meets an egg / ovum (female) and then the fertilised egg settles into the lining of the womb (female)*

All other elements of the RSHE curriculum for Year 6 is statutory as it falls under relationships or health education.

We define Relationships education as learning how to form and sustain positive relationships but will also help children identify risks and harms. Relationships education may therefore include topics related to: respectful, kind relationships, how to distinguish a healthy and an unhealthy relationship, as well as thinking about online relationships.

We define Health education as learning about the benefits and importance of physical activity, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and support our children to develop emotional awareness. We emphasise the relationships between physical health and mental wellbeing, and the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors.

Parental withdraw from sex education

As mentioned above, parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education. **They cannot withdraw from any Relationships or Health education lessons** and this includes lessons about puberty. (Section 21, DfE, 2025, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education). **Children learning correct terminology for body parts is also a statutory requirement as set out in Section 40 of the statutory guidance for Health Education (DfE, 2025).** Body terminology is introduced in Year 2 and reinforced each year after this.

Before granting any request to withdraw a child from sex education we seek to work with the parents/carers concerned to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of our PSHE curriculum. We will also explain any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate.

Once those discussions have taken place, the school will respect the parent/carers' request to withdraw the pupil.

If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

PSHE curriculum and resources

As a school we believe parents and carers should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of our PSHE curriculum. Parents and carers have the right to see a representative sample of materials used within the teaching of PSHE, therefore should parents or carers have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher. As many PSHE materials are copyrighted, the school is not permitted to put teaching materials on any public facing website or social media. If PSHE materials are sent home for parents/carers to view, they will be issued with a statement, that as a condition of access, the content should not be copied or shared further except as authorised under copyright law.

The school consults parents/carers when developing this policy. Communication with parents/carers is made via letter. Parent/carer surveys are offered as well as opportunities to speak to the leadership team. The school gives serious consideration to any comments from parents/carers about the RSHE policy and teaching programme. The overall decision about the content of the school's PSHE programme lies with the school, informed by statutory duties, so parents/carers are not able to veto curriculum content.

The role of the Headteacher and Governing body

Our Governing body ensures:

- all pupils have an entitlement to PSHE/ RSHE;
- the school is fulfilling its statutory obligations in regard to PSHE/RSHE;
- all pupils make progress in regard to PSHE/RSHE;
- PSHE/RSHE is led effectively, managed, timetabled, resourced and well-planned so the school fulfils its statutory obligations;
- the quality of PSHE/RSHE provision is subject to regular monitoring and evaluation;
- teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils;
- clear information is provided for parents/guardians on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education outside of any statutory elements.

The headteacher and governors monitor this policy on a regular basis.

Use of visitors and external agencies

We aim to utilise external agencies to enhance the Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) curriculum as these organisations bring specialised expertise and resources that can enrich the educational experience, providing children with diverse perspectives and practical knowledge. By collaborating with external professionals, we can introduce real-world applications ensuring our curriculum remains relevant and impactful.

The PSHE Subject Lead and/or class teachers will liaise with external agencies and visitors regarding the school PSHE programme and ensures that all adults who work with pupils on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework as

part of the school's quality assurance and safeguarding processes. An example of external providers we use as part of our PSHE programme are: Northumbria Police, North East Ambulance Service, Tyne and Wear Fire Service, RNLI etc.

PSHE and Safeguarding

Inevitably the key themes regarding safeguarding pupil wellbeing are topics that are taught within PSHE. Safeguarding is a statutory duty and we ensure there is age-appropriate content within PSHE to educate pupils about keeping themselves and others safe.

Inclusion

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children. Our inclusive PSHE fosters good relations between pupils and tackles all types of prejudice and discrimination.

Schools have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act, 2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2026). *"Schools should be alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all pupils."* (DfE, 2019)

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Curriculum Committee of the governing body monitors this policy on a bi-annual basis or should a change of circumstances require it. This committee reports its findings and recommendations to the full governing body, as necessary.

The subject lead reviews teaching and learning and uses this to ensure the PSHE programme remains current, closely matched to students need, and that teaching and learning is effective.

Organisation

PSHE lessons are delivered by class teachers and support staff and are timetabled to take place weekly. Pupils are encouraged to discuss and question things if they feel comfortable, and are also encouraged to reflect on their learning. Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and students alike, is vital in PSHE and RSHE. Our pupils are also encouraged to ask questions and share worries with members of staff in the aim to promote a welcoming and 'open' learning culture.

PSHE assessment is conducted using a variety of informal activities which are built into the programme. This could include peer assessment and self-assessment. Teachers delivering

PSHE constantly evaluate their lessons to inform future planning. Any formal recording of work will be kept in our floor books. Much of the work will be verbal and informal.

Meeting the needs of all pupils

High quality PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) and RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) is every child's right, no matter what their level of need or ability. As a school, we acknowledge the need for flexibility, to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of children at different developmental stages, and also are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable due to the nature of their SEND. The SEND code of practice highlights the importance of preparing pupils for adulthood and therefore our teaching is inclusive.

Pupil voice is used each year to involve our children in the shaping of our PSHE and RSHE programme to ensure relevance and understanding. This is led by the subject lead who works collaboratively with a range of children from each year group to ensure a comprehensive understanding of children's thoughts and views.

Disclosures in PSHE/Managing sensitive discussions

Our staff are in daily direct contact with the children at school and they have a duty to help keep our children safe, and support them. The school ethos promotes children's welfare as its top priority, and encourages children to talk freely to staff about any concerns. Staff are kept up-to-date with relevant safeguarding training, and are able to deliver PSHE and RSHE sessions with sensitivity. They are in a position to identify any concerns that may arise as a result of the content in these lessons and are able to deal with these effectively and efficiently, following school protocols. They will always act in the best interest of the child.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in PSHE. Teachers and support staff are prepared to handle personal issues and deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or by individual children. Issues that we address in PSHE are likely to be sensitive and controversial sometimes because they have a political, social or personal impact, or deal with different values and beliefs.

Staff will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Staff will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Staff will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers, peers or families.

Children will be introduced to protective and preventative content in a way that does not cause unreasonable alarm and does not appear to normalise risky behaviours or activities. There may also be cases when we may need to deviate from our published PSHE policy to safeguard children, for example, in later primary, we may decide to discuss the pressure of sharing inappropriate/naked images if this is affecting pupils in school. This teaching will

remain age-appropriate and respectful of all children, including those who may have no familiarity with the topics under discussion.

The school will inform parents of any deviation from the published PSHE policy.

Answering Difficult Questions and Managing Sensitive Issues

Both formal and informal PSHE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. Our school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the PSHE Subject Lead or Designated Safeguarding Lead if they are concerned or need support.

Where possible, teaching strategies use 'distancing' so that pupils discuss issues 'theoretically' e.g., through a case study or a scenario, rather than drawing on personal experiences.

If a child asks a question related to sex education, that is not covered in school, or related to content the child has been withdrawn from, the teacher concerned may provide an answer according to the age and maturity of the child if it is appropriate to do so. If it is not appropriate to provide an answer, the teacher will refer the question to be answered at home.