



# Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

For all schools in the Bosco Catholic Education Trust

This policy has been approved and adopted by  
the Bosco Catholic Education Trust.

<b>Approved:</b>	<b>For review:</b>
January 2026	January 2028

## **1. Bosco Catholic Education Trust Mission Statement**

The Bosco Catholic Education Trust is a Christ-centred family of Catholic academies within the Diocese of Arundel and Brighton, working together as one body to provide an outstanding education for all. As Catholic schools, we endeavour to develop confident, compassionate and faithful young people. Through partnership, collaboration and mutual support, we seek to enable all those entrusted to our care to become the person God called them to be.

“Serve the Lord joyfully.”

## **2. Consultation that has taken place**

Examples would be:

- pupil focus groups/school council
- questionnaires to parents/carers
- review of RSE curriculum content with staff and pupils
- consultation with the wider school community, e.g. school nurse
- consultation with school governors

## **3. Implementation and Review of Policy**

The Bosco Trust Board of Directors will review this policy every two years.

## **4. Dissemination**

The policy will be given to all members of the Local Governing Committee and all teaching and non-teaching staff members. Copies of the document will be available to all parents through the school’s prospectus, and a copy is available in the school office. Details of the content of the RSE curriculum will also be published on the school’s website.

## **5. Defining Relationship and Sex Education**

*‘Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, who you have received from God? You are not your own.’ 1 Corinthians 6:19*

The DFE guidance defines RSE as ‘lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of marriage and family life, stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health’<sup>1</sup>. It is about the development of the pupil’s knowledge and understanding of them as a sexual being, about what it means to be fully human, called to live in right relationships with self and others and being enabled to make moral decisions in conscience. The DFE identifies three main elements: ‘attitudes and values, personal and social skills, and knowledge and understanding.

The Department for Education (DfE) defines **RSHE** as **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education**. According to the statutory guidance:

- **Purpose:** RSHE equips children and young people with the knowledge and skills to make informed, ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health, and relationships. It aims to prepare pupils for adult life and promote their moral, social, mental, and physical development.
- **Legal status:**
  - **Relationships Education** is compulsory for all pupils in **primary education**.
  - **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** is compulsory for all pupils in **secondary education**.
  - **Health Education** is compulsory in all schools except independent schools (which must still provide PSHE).
  - These requirements are set out in the **Children and Social Work Act 2017** and the **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019**.
- **Scope:** RSHE is part of the basic school curriculum and should be integrated into a broad and balanced programme. It covers:
  - Building positive relationships and understanding consent.
  - Safeguarding and preventing harm.
  - Physical and mental health, including puberty, healthy lifestyles, and online safety.
- **Guiding principles:** The curriculum should be inclusive, age-appropriate, sequenced, and delivered by trained staff. It should engage pupils and parents, promote positivity, and be responsive to local needs.

## 6. Statutory Curriculum Requirement – July 2025

### Primary Schools

- **Relationships Education** is **compulsory** for all pupils.
  - Covers: families, caring friendships, respectful relationships, online safety, and being safe.
- **Health Education** is **compulsory** (except in independent schools).
  - Includes: mental wellbeing, physical health, healthy eating, drugs/alcohol/tobacco, personal safety, first aid, and puberty.
- **Sex Education** is **not compulsory**, but recommended in Years 5–6 (linked to science curriculum on conception and birth).
- Parents **cannot withdraw** children from relationships or health education, but can request withdrawal from sex education.

### Secondary Schools

- **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** is **compulsory** for all pupils.
  - Covers: families, respectful relationships, consent, online safety, sexual health, intimate relationships, and being safe.
- **Health Education** is **compulsory** (except in independent schools).

- Includes: mental wellbeing, physical health, healthy eating, drugs/alcohol/tobacco/vaping, health protection, personal safety, first aid, and developing bodies.
- Parents can request withdrawal from sex education, but pupils can opt back in three terms before turning 16.

(There is also a separate requirement for maintained secondary schools to teach about HIV, AIDS and sexually transmitted infections. This does not apply to academies).

However, the reasons for our inclusion of RSE go further.

## **7. Rationale**

*'I HAVE COME THAT YOU MIGHT HAVE LIFE AND HAVE IT TO THE FULL' (Jn.10.10)*

We are involved in relationships and sex education precisely because of our Christian beliefs about God and the human person. Our belief in the unique dignity of the human person made in the image and likeness of God underpins the approach to all education in a Catholic school. Our approach to RSE, therefore, is rooted in the Catholic Church's teaching of the human person and presented in a positive framework of Christian ideals.

At the heart of the Christian life is the Trinity, Father, Son and Spirit in communion, united in loving relationship and embracing all people and all creation. As a consequence of the Christian belief that we are made in the image and likeness of God, gender and sexuality are seen as God's gift, reflect God's beauty, and share in the divine creativity. RSE, therefore, will be placed firmly within the context of the relationship as it is there that sexuality grows and develops.

Following the guidance of the Bishops of England and Wales and as advocated by the DFE, RSE will be firmly embedded in the PSHE framework as it is concerned with nurturing human wholeness and is integral to the physical, spiritual, emotional, moral, social and intellectual development of pupils. It is centred on Christ's vision of being human as good news and will be positive and prudent, showing the potential for development while enabling the dangers and risks involved to be understood and appreciated.

All RSE will be delivered in accordance with the Church's moral teaching. It will emphasise the central importance of marriage and the family while acknowledging that all pupils have a fundamental right to have their lives respected, whatever household they come from. It will also prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

## **8. Values and Virtues**

Our programme enshrines Catholic values regarding the importance of stable relationships, marriage, and family life. It also promotes virtues essential in responding to God's call to love others with proper respect for their dignity and the dignity of the human body. The following virtues will be explicitly explored and promoted: faithfulness, fruitfulness, chastity, integrity, prudence, mercy, and compassion.

## 9. Aim of RSE and the Mission Statement

Our Mission Statement commits us to the education of the whole child (spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, social, cultural, and emotional), and we believe that RSE is an integral part of this education. Furthermore, our school aims state that we will endeavour to raise pupils' self-esteem, help them to grow in knowledge and understanding, recognise the value of all persons and develop caring and sensitive attitudes. It is in this context that we commit ourselves, in partnership with parents, to provide children and young people with a 'positive and prudent sexual education'<sup>1</sup> which is compatible with their physical, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual maturity, and rooted in a Catholic vision of education and the human person.

## 10. Objectives

To develop the following **attitudes and virtues**:

- reverence for the gift of human sexuality and fertility;
- respect for the dignity of every human being – in their own person and in the person of others;
- joy in the goodness of the created world and their own bodily natures;
- responsibility for their own actions and a recognition of the impact of these on others;
- recognising and valuing their own sexual identity and that of others;
- celebrating the gift of life-long, self-giving love;
- recognising the importance of marriage and family life;
- fidelity in relationships.

To develop the following **personal and social skills**:

- making sound judgements and good choices which have integrity, and which are respectful of the individual's commitments;
- loving and being loved, and the ability to form friendships and loving, stable relationships free from exploitation, abuse and bullying;
- managing emotions within relationships, and when relationships break down, with confidence, sensitivity and dignity;
- managing conflict positively, recognising the value of difference;
- cultivating humility, mercy and compassion, learning to forgive and be forgiven;
- developing self-esteem and confidence, demonstrating self-respect and empathy for others;
- building resilience and the ability to resist unwanted pressures, recognising the influence and impact of the media, internet and peer groups and so developing the ability to assess pressures and respond appropriately;
- being patient, delaying gratification and learning to recognise the appropriate stages in the development of relationships, and how to love chastely;
- assessing risks and managing behaviours to minimise health and personal integrity risks.

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<sup>1</sup> Gravissimum Educationis 1

## To know and understand:

- the Church's teaching on relationships and the nature and meaning of sexual love;
- the Church's teaching on marriage and the importance of marriage and family life;
- the centrality and importance of virtue in guiding human living and loving;
- the physical and psychological changes that accompany puberty;
- the facts about human reproduction, how love is expressed sexually and how sexual love plays an essential and sacred role in procreation;
- how to manage fertility in a way which is compatible with their stage of life, their own values and commitments, including an understanding of the difference between natural family planning and artificial contraception;
- how to keep themselves safe from sexually transmitted infections and how to avoid unintended pregnancy, including where to go for advice.

## 11. Outcomes

### **Inclusion and Differentiated Learning**

We will ensure RSE is sensitive to the different needs of individual pupils regarding pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity and personal circumstances; for example, their own sexual orientation, faith or culture and is taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Lessons will also help children to realise the nature and consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including cyber-bullying), use of prejudice-based language and how to respond and ask for help. (In looking at these questions, it is important to draw links to the school's Inclusion Policy).

### **Equalities Obligations**

The Local Governing Committees have broader responsibilities under the Equalities Act 2010 and will ensure that the schools strive to do the best for all pupils, irrespective of disability, educational needs, race, nationality, ethnic or national origin, pregnancy, maternity, sex, gender identity, religion, or sexual orientation or whether they are looked after children.

### **Broad Content of RSE**

Three aspects of RSE - attitudes and values, knowledge and understanding, and personal and social skills will be provided in three interrelated ways: the whole school/ethos dimension, a cross-curricular dimension and a specific relationships and sex curriculum.

### **Programme / Resources**

Teaching strategies will include:

- establishing ground rules
- distancing techniques
- discussion

- project learning
- reflection
- experiential
- active
- brainstorming
- film & video
- group work
- role-play
- trigger drawings
- values clarification

### **Parents and Carers**

We recognise that parents (and other carers who stand in their place) are the primary educators of their children. As a Catholic school, we provide the principal means by which the Church assists parents and carers in educating their children. Therefore, the school will support parents and carers by providing material to share with their children at home and workshops to help parents/carers discover more. Parents/carers will be informed by letter when the more sensitive aspects of RSE will be covered so that they can be prepared to talk and answer questions about their children's learning.

Parents must be consulted before the governors ratify this policy. They will be consulted at every stage of the development of the RSE programme, as well as during monitoring, review, and evaluation. They can view the resources the school uses in the RSE programme. At the end of the consultation process, we aim for every parent and carer to have complete confidence in the school's RSE programme to meet their child's needs.

Parents continue to have **the right to withdraw** their children from Sex Education, except for those elements required by the National Curriculum science orders. Should parents wish to withdraw their children, they are asked to notify the school by contacting the headteacher. The school will provide support by providing material for parents to help the children learn and develop in this critical area of their lives.

We believe that the controlled environment of the classroom is the safest place for this curriculum to be followed. Please refer to the DfE guidance Page 17 for further details on the right to be excused from sex education (commonly referred to as the right to withdraw).

### **Balanced Curriculum**

Whilst promoting Catholic values and virtues and teaching in accordance with Church teaching, we will ensure that pupils are offered a balanced programme by providing an RSE programme that offers a range of viewpoints on issues. Pupils will also receive clear scientific information as well as covering the aspects of the law pertaining to RSE (in secondary schools/academies relating to forced marriage, female genital mutilation, abortion, the age of consent and legislation relating to equality). Knowing about facts and enabling young people to explore differing viewpoints is not the same as promoting behaviour and is not incompatible with our school's promotion of Catholic teaching. We will ensure that pupils have access to the learning they need to stay safe and healthy and understand their rights as individuals.

## **12. Responsibility for Teaching the Programme**

The relevant curriculum staff, including science, religious education, physical education, RSE, and PSHE staff, are responsible for the specific relationships and sex education programme.

However, all staff will be involved in developing the attitudes and values aspect of the RSE programme. They will be role models for pupils of good, healthy, wholesome relationships between staff, other adults, and pupils. They will also contribute to developing pupils' personal and social skills.

## **13. External Visitors**

The schools will often call upon help and guidance from outside agencies and health specialists to deliver aspects of RSE. Such visits will always complement the current programme and never substitute or replace teacher-led sessions. Any external visitor must be clear about their role and responsibility while delivering a session in school. Any visitor must adhere to our code of practice, developed in line with CES guidance, 'Checklist for External Speakers to Schools'<sup>2</sup>.

Health professionals should follow the school's policies, minimising the potential for disclosures or inappropriate comments using negotiated ground rules and distancing techniques as other teachers would. They will ensure that all teaching is rooted in Catholic principles and practice.

## **14. Other Roles and Responsibilities Regarding RSE**

### **Trustees**

- Draw up the RSE policy, in consultation with parents and teachers;
- Ensure that the policy is available to parents;
- Ensure that the policy is in line with other whole school policies, e.g., SEN, the ethos of the school and our Christian beliefs;

### **Local Governing Committees**

- Ensure that parents know of their right to withdraw their children;
- Establish a link governor to share in the monitoring and evaluation of the programme, including resources used;
- Ensure that the policy provides proper and adequate coverage of relevant National Curriculum science topics and the setting of RSE within PSHE.

### **Headteacher**

The Headteacher is delegated overall responsibility for implementing this policy and for liaising with the Bosco Trust Board of Directors, the Local Governing Committee, parents, the Diocesan Schools' Service, the Local Education Authority, and appropriate agencies.

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<sup>2</sup> CES Checklist for External Speakers to Schools, 2016

### **PSHE/RSE Co-ordinator**

The coordinator, along with the headteacher, is responsible for supporting other staff members in implementing this policy and will provide a lead in disseminating information relating to RSE and providing in-service training. (The curriculum deputy and the staff member responsible for child protection may support them.)

### **All Staff**

RSE is a whole school issue. All teachers have a responsibility of care; as well as fostering academic progress, they should actively contribute to the guardianship and guidance of their pupils' physical, moral, and spiritual well-being. Teachers will be expected to teach RSE in accordance with the school's Catholic ethos. Appropriate training will be made available for all staff teaching RSE. All staff have been included in the development of this policy, and all staff should be aware of the policy and how it relates to them.

## **15. Relationship to Other Policies and Curriculum Subjects**

This RSE policy is to be delivered as part of the PSHE framework. It includes guidelines about pupil safety and is compatible with the Trust and schools' other policy documents.

Pupils with particular physical or intellectual difficulties will receive appropriately differentiated support to enable them to achieve mature knowledge, understanding, and skills. Teaching methods will be adapted to meet the varying needs of this group of pupils.

Learning about RSE in PSHE classes will link to/complement learning in those areas identified in the RSE audit.

## **16. Children's Questions**

The governors want to promote a healthy, positive atmosphere where RSE can occur. They want to ensure that pupils can ask questions freely, be confident that their questions will be answered, and be sure that they will be free from bullying or harassment from other children and young people.

## **17. Controversial or Sensitive Issues**

There will always be sensitive or controversial issues in the field of RSE. These may be matters of maturity, personal involvement or experience of children, disagreement with the Church's official teaching, illegal activity or other doubtful, dubious or harmful activity. The governors believe that children are best educated and protected from harm and exploitation by discussing such issues openly within the context of the RSE programme. Using ground rules negotiated between teachers and pupils will help create a supportive climate for discussion. (See also Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Managing difficult questions, Page 23 for more detail)

Some questions may raise issues which it would not be appropriate for teachers to answer during ordinary class time, e.g., where a child or young person's questions hint at abuse, is deliberately tendentious or is of a personal nature.

## **18. Supporting Children and Young People Who Are At Risk**

Children will also need to feel safe and secure in the environment in which RSE takes place. Effective RSE will provide opportunities to discuss what is and is not appropriate in relationships. Such discussion may lead to the disclosure of a safeguarding issue. Teachers will need to be aware of the needs of their pupils and not let any fears and worries go unnoticed. Where a teacher suspects that a child or young person is a victim of or is at risk of abuse, they are required to follow the school's safeguarding policy and immediately inform the designated senior member of staff responsible.

## **19. Confidentiality and Advice**

This policy must be made aware of by all trustees, governors, teachers, support staff, parents, and pupils, particularly regarding issues of advice and confidentiality.

All lessons, especially those in the RSE programme, will have the best interests of pupils at heart, enabling them to grow in knowledge and understanding of relationships and sex, develop appropriate personal and social skills and become appreciative of the values and attitudes which underpin the Christian understanding of what it means to be fully human.

Pupils will be encouraged to talk to their parents/carers about the issues discussed in the programme. Teachers will always help pupils facing personal difficulties, which is in line with the school's pastoral care policy. Teachers should explain to pupils that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality in illegal or abusive matters, for instance. Teachers will explain that in such circumstances, they would have to inform others, e.g., parents, headteacher, but the pupils would always be notified first that such action would be taken.

## **20. Monitoring and Evaluation**

The RSE Co-ordinator will monitor the provision of the various dimensions of the programme by examining plans, schemes of work and samples of pupils' work at regular intervals. The programme will be evaluated bi-annually using questionnaires/response sheets/needs assessments given to pupils and/or by discussion with pupils, staff and parents. The evaluation results should be reported to these groups of interested parties, and their suggestions should be sought for improvements. Bosco CET Trustees will consider all such evaluations and suggestions before amending the policy. Bosco Catholic Education Trust's Board of Directors remains responsible for the policy.

## Reviewed and updated to comply with DfE Statutory Guidance (July 2025)

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### 1. Mission Statement

Our RSE curriculum is rooted in the Catholic understanding of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God. This means:

- Teaching about relationships and sexuality within the context of love, respect, and responsibility.
  - Emphasising virtues such as faithfulness, chastity, compassion, and integrity.
  - Presenting marriage and family life as central to human flourishing while respecting all pupils' backgrounds.
  - Encouraging pupils to make moral decisions informed by conscience and Gospel values.
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### 2. Statutory Compliance

This policy aligns with:

- Education Act 2002 & 1996
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Regulations 2019
- DfE Statutory Guidance July 2025

Schools **must**:

- Teach Relationships Education (Primary), RSE (Secondary), and Health Education.
  - Have regard to this guidance and publish the policy online.
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### 3. Guiding Principles

- **Engagement:** Consult pupils and parents regularly.
  - **Transparency:** All RSHE materials will be shareable with parents; contractual restrictions preventing this are void.
  - **Positivity:** Promote healthy norms and avoid language that normalises harmful behaviour.
  - **Sequencing:** Age-appropriate, progressive curriculum.
  - **Safeguarding:** Staff trained to manage disclosures and follow statutory duties.
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### 4. Curriculum Content

*Primary (By End of Key Stage 2)*

- **Families and People Who Care for Me:** Importance of family for love and security; respect for different family structures; marriage and civil partnerships.

- **Caring Friendships:** Qualities of healthy friendships; managing conflict; seeking help when friendships cause harm.
- **Respectful Relationships:** Setting boundaries; managing feelings; challenging stereotypes; understanding bullying and bystander responsibilities.
- **Online Safety:** Respectful online behaviour; risks of sharing images; privacy settings; minimum age for social media; reporting harmful content.
- **Being Safe:** Concept of privacy; appropriate and inappropriate contact; how to report abuse or unsafe situations.

*Secondary (By End of Key Stage 4)*

- **Families:** Different types of committed relationships; legal status of marriage and civil partnerships; myths about common-law marriage; parenting responsibilities.
- **Respectful Relationships:** Consent and ethical behaviour; managing conflict; ending relationships kindly; impact of stereotypes and power dynamics.
- **Online Safety:** Risks of deepfakes, AI-generated sexual imagery, sextortion, scams; laws on image sharing; managing harmful online content.
- **Pornography and Media Influence:** How pornography distorts sexual norms; links to misogyny and harmful behaviours.
- **Sexual Health:** Full range of contraception; PrEP/PEP for HIV prevention; STI transmission and testing; pregnancy choices (keeping baby, adoption, abortion).
- **Being Safe:** Recognising sexual harassment and violence; laws on rape, coercive control, strangulation; FGM and virginity testing; reporting abuse.

## 5. Health and Wellbeing

- Mental health: resilience, stigma reduction.
- Sleep hygiene and screen-free time.
- Risks of vaping, nicotine pouches, and gambling (including gaming monetisation).
- Suicide prevention and eating disorders (with specialist input).
- Menstrual health: use inclusive language (e.g., “period products”).

## 6. Equality and Inclusion

- Teach all protected characteristics under Equality Act 2010.
- Avoid teaching contested views as fact (e.g., gender identity).
- Ensure SEND accessibility and safeguarding for vulnerable pupils.

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## **7. Parental Engagement**

- Parents consulted on policy and curriculum.
- All RSHE materials available via parent portal or presentations.
- Copyright law will not be used to refuse sharing materials.

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## **8. Safeguarding**

- Mandatory reporting duty for child sexual abuse.
- Clear process for disclosures during RSHE lessons.
- External visitors must agree safeguarding responsibilities in advance.

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## **9. Legal Framework**

Teaching will include:

- Age of Marriage Act 2023
- Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- Online Safety Act
- Laws on image sharing, sextortion, and AI-generated sexual imagery.

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## **10. Teaching Methods**

- Distancing techniques, anonymous question boxes, and ground rules for sensitive topics.
- Staff training on safeguarding and managing disclosures.

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## **11. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- Annual review by Trust Board.
- Feedback from pupils, parents, and staff.
- Compliance checks against statutory guidance.

## Appendix: Full Topic Tables (In line with DfE Statutory Guidance, July 2025)

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### A. Relationships Education – Primary (End of Key Stage 2)

#### 1) Families and People Who Care for Me

- Families provide love, security and stability; commitment and care are characteristics of safe family life.
- Families vary (e.g., single parents, same-sex parents, kinship carers, foster/adoptive families); all should be respected.
- Stable, caring relationships underpin safe and happy families.
- Marriage and civil partnership are legally recognised, intended to be lifelong.
- Recognise when family relationships feel unhappy/unsafe and how to seek help.

#### 2) Caring Friendships

- Importance of friendships for happiness and security; choosing/making friends.
- Healthy friendships are welcoming and do not exclude.
- Loneliness can affect anyone; it is okay to talk about feeling lonely.
- Positive friendship traits: mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, support.
- Friendships have ups and downs; conflicts can be repaired.
- Violence is never acceptable; learn conflict management skills.
- Recognise when a friendship feels uncomfortable/harmful and how to get help.

#### 3) Respectful, Kind Relationships

- Paying attention to others' needs and preferences in families/friendships.
- Setting and respecting healthy boundaries with peers, adults and online.
- Assertive communication; managing feelings (disappointment, frustration) kindly.
- Distinguish assertiveness vs. control; kindness vs. neglecting one's own needs.
- Expect to be treated respectfully; respect people who are different or make different choices.
- Practical steps/skills to support relationships in varied contexts.
- Courtesy and good manners.
- Self-respect, self-esteem and building identity through skills/interests.
- Types and impacts of bullying (including online); bystander responsibilities (reporting).
- Stereotypes: how they can be unfair/destructive; how to challenge them.
- How and where to seek help about violence, harm or trust concerns.

#### 4) Online Safety and Awareness

- Respectful online behaviour; same principles as face-to-face, including anonymity.
- Critically evaluate online relationships and information; risks of people pretending to be someone else/children; recognise/report harmful content/contact.
- Minimum age for social media (currently 13) and why it matters.
- Caution when sharing personal information; use privacy/location settings.

- Understand that online material can be copied/circulated; loss of control once shared.
- The internet includes upsetting/inappropriate content; where to seek advice/support.

## 5) Being Safe

- Appropriate boundaries in play and shared spaces/resources (including online).
  - Privacy: it is not always right to keep secrets if safety is concerned.
  - Each person's body belongs to them; differences between appropriate/inappropriate contact.
  - Respond safely to adults (known/unknown; online/offline).
  - Recognise harmful/dangerous relationships; who to trust.
  - How to report abuse/online concerns/unsafe feelings and vocabulary for doing so.
  - How to ask for advice/help and persist until heard; sources of support.
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## B. Sex Education – Primary (Non-statutory, recommended)

- Link teaching (typically Y5/Y6) to science content on conception/birth.
  - Consult parents on content and right to withdraw; provide support for home conversations.
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## C. Relationships and Sex Education – Secondary (End of Key Stage 4)

### 1) Families

- Different forms of committed, stable relationships and their role in wellbeing/raising children.
- Legal status of marriage/civil partnership; associated rights/benefits/protections.
- 'Common-law marriage' is a myth; cohabitation does not grant marriage-like legal status.
- Forced marriage and marriage under 18 are illegal; how to seek help.
- How families change over time (birth, death, separation, new relationships).
- Parenting roles/responsibilities; importance of early years and brain development.
- Judging when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help.

### 2) Respectful Relationships

- Characteristics of positive relationships (online/offline), including romantic relationships.
- Kindness, consent, trust, honesty, boundaries, tolerance, privacy; conflict management, reconciliation, endings.
- Self-esteem/independence; positive relationship with self supports healthy relationships.
- What tolerance involves, including tolerance of others' beliefs.
- Practical communication skills with partners and strangers, including in conflict.
- Bullying (including online); bystander responsibilities; help routes.
- Skills for ending relationships kindly; managing difficult feelings.
- Role of consent and sexual ethics: kindness, care, attention to vulnerabilities; awareness of power dynamics; consent alone does not guarantee ethical behaviour.
- Stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability; recognising misogyny and prejudice.
- Inequalities of power and their impact in relationships.

- Negative influences of pornography on attitudes/behaviours; sexual entitlement/disempowerment.
- How sub-cultures/influencers (e.g., 'incel') may promote harmful norms; critical discussion.

### 3) Online Safety and Awareness

- Rights/responsibilities/opportunities online; same behaviour expectations apply.
- Personal information: privacy/location settings; difference between public/private spaces.
- Social media characteristics: fake/exaggerated accounts; AI-created content; extreme expression; curated self-images.
- Do not provide/share material likely to be circulated; serious risks and law on image sharing.
- It is a crime to keep/forward indecent images of under-18s (including AI generated/self-images); how to seek help if an image of self is shared; non-consensual sharing of adult images is also a crime.
- How to report/manage circulations of personal information/images/videos.
- Deepfakes: prevalence, harms, identification strategies.
- Inappropriate/illegal content online (misogyny, violence, weapons); distorted norms; where to get support.
- Conflict escalation via social media; de-escalation strategies; help sources.
- Tech-facilitated abuse: bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive control; how to seek support.
- Pornography's distorted portrayals and negative effects on behaviour/attitudes.
- How information/data are generated/collected/shared; targeted advertising; data protection awareness.
- Online scams and sextortion; recognising and seeking support.
- Rapidly developing AI (e.g., chatbots) and risks (fake intimacy/harmful advice); critical thinking.

### 4) Being Safe

- Recognising, respecting and communicating consent/boundaries in early romantic/sexual contexts; kindness beyond consent.
- Strategies to identify/resist/understand peer/other pressures (including sexual pressure) and avoid pressuring others.
- Judging trustworthiness; recognising unsafe relationships (including in others); seeking/reporting help.
- Personal safety in public spaces; help-seeking/reporting harmful behaviour without victim-blaming.
- Sexual harassment/violence: concepts, laws; it is never the victim's fault.
- Sexual harassment behaviours: unsolicited language/attention/touching; taking/sharing intimate images; public sexual harassment; pressuring sexual acts; upskirting.
- Laws on sexual violence (rape/assault) and harmful sexual behaviour (including age-inappropriate sexual language).
- Domestic abuse: controlling/coercive behaviour; emotional/sexual/economic/physical abuse; violent/threatening behaviour.
- Fixated/obsessive/unwanted/repeated behaviours may be criminal; seeking help.

- Exploitative harms: sexual/criminal exploitation; grooming; financial exploitation.
- Forced marriage.
- FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty: physical/emotional harms; criminal offences; protection duties.
- Strangulation and suffocation: criminal offences; serious risks.
- Pornography presents harmful/abnormal activities; emotional/physical risks.
- Seeking support/reporting abuse; accessing medical attention after assault.

## 5) Intimate and Sexual Relationships, Including Sexual Health

- Sex (for those ready and over age of consent) should be positive and enjoyable; choosing not to have sex is valid.
  - Consent: capacity to give/withhold/withdraw at any time; considerations (law, faith, family values); kindness beyond consent.
  - Choices impact all aspects of health (physical, emotional, mental, sexual, reproductive).
  - Some sexual behaviours are harmful.
  - Contraception: range, efficacy and options; signpost to medically accurate sources.
  - Pregnancy choices: impartial information on keeping baby, adoption, abortion; where to get help.
  - STIs (including HIV): transmission; risk reduction (safer sex/condoms); PrEP/PEP availability and access; importance of testing; stigma.
  - STI prevalence; short/long-term impacts; treatment facts.
  - Alcohol/drugs: increased risk-taking in sexual behaviour.
  - Seeking support for concerns (including violence/harms) and countering misinformation; access confidential sexual/reproductive health services.
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## D. Health and Wellbeing – Primary (End of Key Stage 2)

### 1) General Wellbeing

- Benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others; simple self-care (rest, friendships, hobbies, community participation).
- Importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
- Range/scale of emotions; worrying/feeling down are normal; not necessarily a mental health condition.
- Recognise feelings; use varied vocabulary to talk about own/others' feelings.
- Judging if feelings/behaviour are appropriate/proportionate.
- Isolation/loneliness can affect children; benefits of seeking support.
- Bullying (including cyberbullying) has negative/lasting impact; how to seek help.
- Change and loss (bereavement); grief is natural and varied.
- Where/how to seek support and triggers for doing so; who to speak to in school (including online issues).
- Mental health problems are common; early support helps.

## 2) Wellbeing Online

- Internet is integral to life; discuss positives/negatives.
- Online relationships may complement in-person ones but are not substitutes; pros/cons of online connection.
- Limiting time online; risks of excessive device use; impact of content on wellbeing.
- Impact of online behaviour on others; respectful conduct.
- Age-restricted apps/games/gambling; why restrictions exist.
- Risks in online gaming: monetisation, scams/fraud, financial harms; gaming can be addictive.
- Critical approach to online content; decide what's appropriate.
- Abuse/bullying/harassment online affect wellbeing; seek support from trusted adults.
- How search engines select/target information.
- Rights regarding personal data, privacy and consent.
- Reporting concerns and getting support.

## 3) Physical Health and Fitness

- Characteristics/benefits of active lifestyle.
- Building regular activity into routines (walk/cycle to school; daily mile; moderate/vigorous activity).
- Risks of inactive lifestyle (including obesity).
- How/when to seek support; who to speak to in school.

## 4) Healthy Eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet (calories/nutritional content).
- Importance of a healthy relationship with food.
- Principles of planning/preparing healthy meals.
- Poor diet risks (obesity, tooth decay) and impacts of behaviours (e.g., alcohol).

## 5) Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping

- Facts about legal/illegal harmful substances and associated risks; smoking, vaping, alcohol, drug-taking; nicotine addiction (including nicotine pouches).

## 6) Health Protection and Prevention

- Recognise early signs of physical illness.
- Sun safety and reducing risk of sun damage/skin cancer.
- Sleep: recommended amounts; steps to improve sleep (e.g., no screens in bedroom); impacts of poor sleep.
- Dental health and oral hygiene (fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, dentist checkups).
- Personal hygiene; germs (bacteria, viruses), spread/treatment; handwashing.
- Facts/evidence on vaccination/immunisation (aligned with offered vaccinations).

## 7) Personal Safety

- Hazards (including fire risks) and risk-reduction.
- Safety around roads, railways/level crossings, and water (water safety code).

## 8) Basic First Aid

- Making clear/efficient emergency calls; report incidents rather than film them.
- Concepts of basic first aid; common injuries/ailments, including head injuries.

## 9) Developing Bodies

- Growth and bodily changes, especially during adolescence; puberty as a lifecycle stage.
  - Correct names of body parts (penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples); privacy and boundary-setting.
  - Facts about menstrual cycle; periods can start as early as age 8; prepare before onset.
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# E. Health and Wellbeing – Secondary (End of Key Stage 4)

## 1) Mental Wellbeing

- Talking about emotions accurately/sensitively; appropriate vocabulary.
- Benefits of physical activity, sleep, time outdoors, community participation, volunteering/acts of kindness.
- Happiness is linked to connection; loneliness is normal sometimes.
- Worrying/feeling down are normal and not necessarily mental illness.
- Characteristics of common mental ill-health (anxiety/depression) and factual information about more serious conditions without over-pathologising normal feelings.
- Critically evaluate activities that support overall wellbeing.
- Overcoming anxiety/barriers to participating in enjoyable activities; coping strategies.
- Gambling can cause serious mental health harms; some products are higher risk.
- Co-occurrence of alcohol/drug use and poor mental health; bi-directional relationship; stopping smoking can improve mental health.

## 2) Wellbeing Online

- Limiting time online; risks of excessive device use; impacts of content on wellbeing.
- Online vs physical world: unhealthy comparison; curated images; over-reliance on online relationships.
- Identify/report harmful online behaviours (bullying/abuse/harassment).
- Risks of online gambling/gambling-like content in gaming; debt risks.
- Targeted advertising and being a discerning consumer; misinformation/disinformation/conspiracy theories.
- Risks of illegal online behaviours (drug/knife supply; purchase of illicit drugs).
- Serious risks of self-harm/suicide/violence content; safe reporting; accessing support.

## 3) Physical Health and Fitness

- Healthy lifestyle characteristics; maintaining healthy weight; links between inactivity and ill-health (including cardiovascular).

- Factual information on prevalence/characteristics of serious health conditions.
- Physical activity promotes wellbeing; combats stress.
- Science of blood, organ and stem cell donation.

#### 4) Healthy Eating

- Maintaining healthy eating; links between poor diet and risks (tooth decay, unhealthy weight gain, cardiovascular disease).
- Risks of unhealthy weight gain (cancer, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease).
- Alcohol's impact on diet/weight gain.

#### 5) Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping

- Illegal drugs: which are illegal; risks (including potent synthetic drugs added to illegal drugs); risks of illicit vapes containing drugs/counterfeit medicines; health harms and mental health links.
- Law on supply/possession of illegal substances.
- Alcohol: physical/psychological risks; low-risk consumption in adulthood; legal age of sale; personal safety while drinking (spiking risks; methanol poisoning).
- Problem alcohol use and dependency.
- Dangers of misusing prescribed/OTC medicines.
- Harms from smoking tobacco (lung cancer, cardiovascular disease); benefits of quitting; how to access support.
- Facts about vaping: harms to young people; role in adult smoking cessation.

#### 6) Health Protection and Prevention, and Understanding the Healthcare System

- Personal hygiene; germs/bacteria/viruses; treatment/prevention; antibiotics.
- Dental health and oral hygiene; reducing sugar intake; dentist checkups.
- Self-care for minor ailments; pharmacists' role.
- Taking responsibility for health; benefits of self-examination and screening.
- Vaccination/immunisation and antimicrobial resistance; align teaching with offered vaccinations.
- Sleep: sufficient good-quality sleep; screen-free time before bed; removing phones from bedroom; impacts of lack of sleep.
- Healthy behaviours before/during pregnancy; pre-conception health (folic acid); pelvic floor health; miscarriage/pregnancy loss; accessing care/support.
- Navigating local healthcare: GP, A&E/minor injuries, sexual health/family planning clinics, pharmacies, local third-sector services.
- Gillick competence: legal age of medical consent (16); when under-16s may consent; capacity considerations over 16.

#### 7) Personal Safety

- Identifying risk/managing safety in increasingly independent situations (roads, railways/level crossings, water; unfamiliar social/work settings).
- Peer influence on risk-taking, including online/social media; management strategies.

- Social/emotional skills to increase safety (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, responsible decision-making; recognising/managing peer pressure).
- Which trusted adults to talk to about violence/knife crime.
- Law related to knives/violence; teach with local context; avoid fear-based approaches.
- Risks/signs of grooming/exploitation; how to seek help.

## 8) Basic First Aid

- Treatment for common injuries/ailments.
- Life-saving skills, including CPR (usually taught after age 12).
- Defibrillators: purpose, when needed, who can use them.

## 9) Developing Bodies

- Main changes in males/females; implications for emotional/physical health.
  - Facts about puberty and adolescent brain development.
  - Menstrual/gynaecological health: average period; PMS; heavy bleeding; endometriosis; PCOS; when to seek help.
  - Reproductive health: fertility and menopause; lifestyle impacts on fertility (men and women).
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## Notes on Delivery and Sequencing

- Deliver content via a broad and balanced curriculum; integrate RSHE with science, computing, PE and citizenship.
  - Use participative teaching with safe ground rules; distancing techniques and question boxes for sensitive topics.
  - Inform parents in advance of sex education content; respect withdrawal rights (see Policy Section 7).
  - Ensure materials are age-appropriate, accurate, unbiased and accessible; make **all materials available to parents** upon request.
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## Appendix: Legal References and Parental Withdrawal Guidance

- Legal Framework: Education Act 2002 & 1996; Children and Social Work Act 2017; Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Regulations 2019; Equality Act 2010; Age of Marriage Act 2023; Domestic Abuse Act 2021; Online Safety Act.
  - Parental Withdrawal: Parents may request withdrawal from sex education (not relationships or health education). Requests should be made to the Headteacher. Pupils may opt back in three terms before turning 16. Schools must provide alternative purposeful education during withdrawal.
  - Teaching about relationships and sexuality within the context of love, respect, and responsibility.
  - Emphasising virtues such as faithfulness, chastity, compassion, and integrity.
  - Presenting marriage and family life as central to human flourishing while respecting all pupils' backgrounds.
  - Encouraging pupils to make moral decisions informed by conscience and Gospel values.
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### Key Differences from Previous Policy (2019 Guidance)

1. **Expanded Online Safety**
  - Now includes AI-generated content, deepfakes, sextortion, scams, and risks of sharing images.
2. **Sexual Ethics Beyond Consent**
  - Emphasis on kindness, care, and awareness of power dynamics.
3. **New Health Topics**
  - Sleep hygiene, vaping, nicotine pouches, gambling harms, suicide prevention, and eating disorders.
4. **Legal Updates**
  - Age of Marriage Act 2023, Domestic Abuse Act 2021, Online Safety Act.
5. **Parental Transparency**
  - Schools must share all RSHE materials with parents; contractual restrictions are void.
6. **Equality Guidance**
  - Avoid teaching contested views (e.g., gender identity) as fact; integrate protected characteristics.
7. **Safeguarding Duties**
  - Mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse; clearer handling of disclosures.

**Attribution:** Based on [DfE, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education – Statutory Guidance \(July 2025\)](#).