Local Procedure/Protocol

School/Home Name:	Oversands School
Local Procedure/Protocol Title:	Relationships and Sex Education Protocol
Linked to Group Policy Title & Code:	Relationships and Sex Education Policy
Date Reviewed:	April 2026
Consultation of Draft Policy:	Summer Term 2026
Date Finalised and Published:	September 2026
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Procedure/Protocol Lead:	D Ward-Banks – PSHE Lead
Procedure/Protocol Sponsor:	Kelly Berry – School Development Lead

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Witherslack Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any protected characteristics and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

ENVIRONMENT, SOCIAL, GOVERNANCE (ESG) STATEMENT

Witherslack Group is committed to responsible business practices in the areas of: Environmental Stewardship, Social Responsibility, Governance, Ethics & Compliance. An ESG impact assessment has been completed on this procedure/protocol to ensure it can be implemented successfully without adverse implications on our Group goals.

To ensure that this procedure/protocol is relevant and up to date, comments and suggestions for additions or amendments are sought from users of this document. To contribute towards the process of review, please email the named policy lead.

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1. RATIONALE AND CONSULTATION

1.1 1.1 This protocol sets out the framework for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at our school providing clarity on how our RSE curriculum is informed, organised and delivered. This links directly to the Witherslack Group Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy which is a statutory requirement.

1.2 At our school, we continue to be committed to liaising with parents and carers about all aspects of their child's education. As such, we understand the importance of the role of parents and carers in the development of their child's understanding about relationships, sex and health. From September 2020, the law required schools to consult with parents and carers on their approach to RSE. The updated RSHE statutory guidance (from September 2026) also formalises expectations around parental engagement, requiring schools to meaningfully consult parents when reviewing RSHE policies and to share curriculum materials on request, including those from external providers.

1.3 Our school will notify and engage with parents and carers when developing and reviewing our local procedure RSE policy ,and listen to views raised as part of that consultation. Opportunities will be provided for parents and carers to view RSHE resources and curriculum materials, including those related to the teaching of sensitive topics, including those from external providers. During the Summer Term schools/learning centres will provide an opportunity for parents to read and feedback on their draft local protocol policy document before it is published ahead of implementation in September and uploaded to the school website.

1.4 We will provide additional opportunities for parents/carers to be informed and ask questions about the delivery and content of the RSE curriculum by providing:

- Notification of when RSE topics are to be taught and a summary of the content to be covered
- Opportunities to view and discuss examples of RSE teaching and learning resources and curriculum materials, including those related to the teaching of sensitive topics, including those of external providers
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE

Insert additional approaches to engagement/consultation with parents as specific to the school eg. newsletter, parents eve
Primary – presentation and consultation with parents/careers on 8th July 2026
Secondary – WG care homes presentation and consultation on 15th July 2026
Secondary – presentation and consultation via Teams with parents/careers on 22nd July 2026

To all parents/carers a letter explaining the changes to our curriculum and a copy of our Oversands RSE and Local Procedure Protocol sent out – this includes parents right to withdraw their child(ren) from Sex Education and information on how they access the resources and materials being taught.

1.5 Parents/carers of new pupils will be provided with all of the above information at the point of admission, regardless of the time of year they join the school. Parents/carers will be provided with opportunities to find out about the progress of their children in RSE related topics; for example, as part of Annual Reviews of EHCPs, during parents' evenings and within termly progress reports.

1.6 We understand that parents and carers may have concerns about some aspects of RSE and all views will be listened to and carefully considered. However, the school will ultimately make the final decision about what is to be taught and when, and this will be informed by our statutory obligations as well as parental views and the needs of our pupils.

1.7 This policy reflects the updated statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) issued by the Department for Education. The revised guidance was published following a government review and comes into force for schools from September 2026.

1.8 This policy was reviewed and developed in response to the guidance referenced in Section 13.

2. DEFINITIONS

2.1 Within the parameters of this protocol, the following definitions apply:

- ***PSHE:*** Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.
- ***RSHE:*** Relationships, sex education and health education
- ***Health education:*** Health education is learning about physical health and mental wellbeing
- ***Relationships education:*** Relationships education is learning about the physical, social, legal, and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, family life and relationships with other children and adults
- ***RSE:*** Relationships and sex education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health
- ***Sex education:*** Sex education is learning about reproduction, pregnancy and birth, preventing pregnancy and STIs

3. AIMS AND INTENT

3.1 At our school, our over-arching aims for RSE are as follows:

- To deliver high-quality, age-appropriate and developmentally sequenced RSE as part of a planned, inclusive curriculum that reflects our school ethos and meets statutory requirements.
- To work in partnership with parents and carers through effective consultation and transparent communication, while retaining responsibility for the statutory curriculum.
- To provide pupils with accurate, factual and reliable information from trusted sources, tailored to the strengths and needs of individual pupils,
- To ensure RSE is safeguarding-led, enabling pupils to understand risk, keep themselves safe, and know how and where to seek help.
- To provide a safe and supportive environment in which pupils can engage confidently in sensitive discussions, ask questions and address misconceptions.
- To promote respectful, healthy relationships, including understanding consent, equality and personal responsibility.
- To support pupils to recognise, challenge and report harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment, sexual violence and online harms.
- To support pupils' ongoing personal development and preparation for future life.

3.2 In order to achieve our aims, we will plan and teach the RSE content set out by the DfE and provided in ***Appendix 1*** of this policy.

4. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND RIGHT TO WITHDRAW

4.1 The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, introduced compulsory requirements for Relationships, Sex and Health Education in schools from September 2020. From this date, Health Education became compulsory for all pupils in primary and secondary schools. Relationships Education is compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

4.2 It is important to note that primary schools have the option to decide whether or not pupils are taught 'Sex Education'. In order to support pupils' ongoing emotional and physical development effectively, we will offer this for our primary-aged pupils at our school where the teaching and learning is appropriate for the age and maturity of each pupil. However, the vast majority of what is taught as part of 'Sex Education' for our primary-aged pupils, is already covered as part of the National Curriculum for Science or as part of Health Education in PSHE.

4.3 RSE is an important part of our curriculum and it is hoped that all pupils will participate in all aspects of these lessons. However, the school acknowledges the rights of parents/carers as described below:

Adjust as related to the age-registration of the school/learning centre:

- From September 2020, parents of both primary and secondary-aged pupils will not be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body, puberty and developing and nurturing healthy friendships and relationships).
- Parents of both primary and secondary-aged pupils will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of the National Curriculum for Science (which includes subject content such as {PRIMARY} the names of external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age, and reproduction/off-spring in some plants and animals AND {SECONDARY} reproduction in humans and plants, hormones in reproduction, hormone and non-hormone methods of contraception communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans).
- Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school and providing notification to the Headteacher in writing) from any or all aspects of Sex Education (other than those provided as part of the Science curriculum) up to and until three terms before the age of 16.
- In line with the statutory guidance, where pupils are withdrawn from Sex Education, we will keep a record of this (including discussions/requests from parents/carers) and we will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- In line with the statutory guidance, if any secondary-aged pupil wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the pupil with Sex Education during one of the three terms before the age of 16.
- At Post 16, we will continue to offer Sex Education to our pupils as part of their non-qualification activities linked to the development of character, broader skills, attitudes and confidence and in preparation for transition to life beyond school. Parents/carers will not have the right to withdraw pupils from this. Post 16 will access the Key Stage 4 curriculum offer.

4.4 For further clarity, please see Appendix 2 of this protocol for an overview of the compulsory aspects of RSE at the different stages of education as set out by the DfE.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 At our school, the Headteacher, assumes overall responsibility for ensuring that the organisation and delivery of RSE lessons are carried out by staff who have an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge and that all pupils make progress in achieving the expected outcomes. The Headteacher is also responsible for managing

any requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory sex education lessons and organising alternative appropriate education.

5.2 The PSHE and Citizenship Lead (D Ward-Banks), is responsible for ensuring that RSE is well planned and sequenced, both as part of an overall long-term plan and specific schemes of work. With the support of the Senior Leadership Team, the PSHE and Citizenship Lead is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently well across the school and is suitably resourced. This may include liaising with and supporting other staff members/external professionals who deliver some/all of the RSE lessons at our school. The PSHE/Citizenship Lead is expected to work closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) as well as colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum is suitable for individual pupils and complements content covered in National Curriculum subjects.

5.3 Teachers who are given responsibility for delivering RSE lessons must recognise the importance of RSE. They must seek support, advice and additional professional development wherever necessary to ensure that teaching continues to be well-prepared and of a high standard at all times.

5.4 The governance structure provided by Witherslack Group will ensure that the school complies with the provisions of the RSE policy and local protocol and that legal obligations related to RSE are fulfilled.

6. TRAINING AND CPD

6.1

At our school, we recognise the importance of ensuring teachers of RSE have an appropriate level of expertise and knowledge. This is achieved through internal and external training (eg. from the Sex Education Forum), attendance at Witherslack Group PSHE and Citizenship Network Meetings, National College Training, External CPD, and support from the school's PSHE and Citizenship Lead and DSL. Training has also been provided by Anti Racism Cumbria and Show Racism the Red Card.

7. IMPLEMENTATION (ORGANISATION AND DELIVERY)

7.1 At our school RSE is carefully planned and delivered primarily through our PSHE and Citizenship curriculum. PSHE/Citizenship lessons are given a high priority and are timetabled every week for all Key Stages. Some aspects of RSE feature across several topics, yet discrete RSE topics are also planned and delivered, giving full consideration to the timing of this as related to the age and emotional maturity of our pupils. Additional teaching may also take place within assemblies, Science lessons, RE lessons and other areas of the curriculum, but these will be part of our carefully planned approach to RSE and not simply an 'add-on'. Please see Appendix 3 of this policy for an overview of RSE within our curriculum.

7.2 Through effective organisation and delivery of RSE, all Witherslack Group schools and learning centres ensure that:

- RSE is delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment. Approaches such as distancing techniques and use of classroom question boxes (encouraging pupils to use their names) will allow pupils to raise issues or ask questions which they may find embarrassing.
- Teachers ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Ground rules are developed and shared with pupils as part of best practice. Ground rules help to ensure discussions and personal questions/comments are managed appropriately and sensitively, along with those questions which are more challenging.
- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.

- Taught content provides opportunities to revisit previous content and allows clear progression. Topics and lessons are carefully sequenced, within a planned scheme of work, and where relevant are linked to other areas of the curriculum.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.
- The curriculum proactively addresses issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupils' development as well as their age.
- Groupings are carefully considered by teachers and senior leaders (including the Designated Safeguarding Lead as appropriate) - some classes may be taught in gender-specific groups, on a one to one basis or within a whole class setting - dependent on the nature of the topic being delivered at the time, the cultural, religious or personal background of pupils, their age and SEND.
- All resources are selected carefully and are suitable for the needs of the pupils being taught – inappropriate/illegal images, videos and other materials are not be used in any circumstances and all related school policies will be are followed.
- Care is taken to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of any pupil based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; e.g. children in care or young carers.
- There is an awareness that some pupils are more susceptible to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and appropriate actions will be taken to mitigate this.
- There is a balance between teaching pupils about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online), whilst being clear it is never the fault of any child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong.
- It is recognised that pupils may be discovering or understanding their sexual orientation or gender identity and all pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner.
- Content related to LGBTQ+ is fully integrated into a range of topics, rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.
- There is a focus on challenging perceived derogatory views about the legally protected characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.
- Steps are taken to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and we provide an environment which challenges sexual violence and harassment as well as perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other protected characteristic.
- There is awareness of issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia, gender stereotypes, sexual violence and harassment (including online), with pupils taught to recognise, challenge and report such behaviours, and with positive action taken to build a school culture within which these are not tolerated. Teaching is underpinned by clear messages about consent, respect, equality, safeguarding, and the law, and avoids reinforcing gender stereotypes.
- Awareness of the issues of sexting and youth produced sexual imagery are not taught in isolation and instead are taught as part of a carefully sequenced, age-appropriate and developmental PSHE programme. Teaching is safeguarding-led, reflects the legal context, and is informed by current government guidance, including Sharing nudes and semi-nudes. Pupils are taught about consent, coercion, online risk, and how to report concerns and access support.

8. WORKING WITH OTHER PROFESSIONALS

8.1 Working with external agencies can sometimes enhance our delivery of some aspects of RSE, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. For example, our school may consider accessing support from the NHS or local specialist services who may be able to provide advice and CPD for teachers. Alternatively, we might introduce pupils to the School Nurse or a representative from the NSPCC Speak Out/Stay Safe Programme via a workshop.

8.2 Our school only uses visitors to enhance teaching provided by our school staff, not to replace it. Staff employed by the school will be present during any RSE session delivered by an external visitor commissioned by the school. It will be agreed with any visitor how confidentiality will work in any lesson and how safeguarding reports are to be dealt with in line with the school Child Protection Policy and Procedures. Similarly, the school will consider whether information-sharing is necessary and will comply with the provisions of the school's Data Protection Policy.

8.3 Where external experts are invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of RSE, they will be expected to comply with the provisions of this protocol and any related policies. In line with the usual procedures and policies of our school, we will check the credentials of all external agencies and we will ensure the teaching delivered by any external experts fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this protocol. The school/learning centre will discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure that content is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. The school/learning centre will request copies of the materials and lesson plans the visitor will use, to ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs needs and ensure it is available for parents to access.

8.4 Where a pupil has involvement from specialist external agencies, discussions between those agencies and appropriate senior staff in school, including the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), are important in order to ensure that RSE lessons are delivered in a way that is most appropriate for the individual child.

9. SAFEGUARDING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

9.1 At our school there is a focus on keeping our pupils safe, and the RSE curriculum plays an important role in our preventative education. All pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe, including how to stay safe online and how to stay safe within the community, as part of our over-arching curriculum. Teachers are made aware of common 'adverse childhood experiences' or ACEs (such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence). Teachers should understand that pupils who have experienced problems at home may depend more on schools for support.

9.2 The PSHE/Citizenship Lead liaises with the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in anything that is safeguarding-related within the context of PSHE and Citizenship, including RSE and keeping safe. The DSL is likely to have knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources that could be engaged, as well as knowledge of any particular local issues which may be appropriate to address in lessons. The DSL liaises with the PSHE and Citizenship Lead about the circumstances of individual pupils if felt to be required, including when and how adverse childhood experiences may be affecting any individual pupil and so may be influencing how they experience these subjects topics. Additional professional advice will be sought if needed as related to those pupils, including support and advice from our on-site clinical services staff.

9.3 Our good practice allows pupils to have an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues and it is recognised that such discussions could lead to increased safeguarding reports. The school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures must be adhered to at all times and without exception, concerns or disclosures made within or as a result of PSHE and Citizenship lessons must be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). Pupils are made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This includes processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. Staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

10. Managing Difficult Questions

10.1 At our school, the PSHE and Citizenship Lead will provide advice to staff on the type of questions which are appropriate and inappropriate to ask and answer within a whole-class setting and the use of Ground Rules with pupils will support this process. Depending on the nature of the questions asked, staff will use their skill and discretion to determine whether a question will be answered at the time. They may decide to explain to a pupil that their question will be returned to at a later time and they may decide to discuss possible responses to questions with a parent/carer, the PSHE and Citizenship Lead, the DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership

Team. Answers to questions may then be followed-up with individuals, small groups or a whole class as deemed to be appropriate.

11. IMPACT AND ASSESSMENT

11.1 Our school has the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSE as for other curriculum areas. Our curriculum builds on the knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including in other subjects, with regular feedback provided on pupil progress. We recognise that impact of the RSE curriculum may not ever be observed in school or indeed until adulthood, but every effort will be made to track destination data which will provide us with some impact information. We will also make efforts to find out if pupils have been able to apply learning in the community or at home as appropriate eg. through discussions with parents, carers and other professionals

11.2 Learning is assessed and assessments are used to identify where pupils need extra support, intervention or additional challenge. Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for RSE, teachers will assess all outcomes to capture progress. Strategies include assessment against the school's own assessment system (see Assessment, Marking and Feedback Policy), as well as additional tests/quizzes, written assignments, self/peer evaluations, use of structured questioning, mind-maps, presentations/role-play, pupil interviews and learning portfolios.

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

12.1 Supported by the Senior Leadership Team, the PSHE and Citizenship Lead is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in RSE.
The quality of RSE provision is also subject to regular and effective self-evaluation as part of termly subject reports for PSHE and Citizenship. Information to be taken into account includes feedback from lesson visits and learning walks, planning and work scrutiny, pupil and parent feedback and pupil progress.

12.2 Factors to be considered as part of this process are outlined below:

- Is the curriculum effectively managed and are staff teaching RSE suitably skilled and knowledgeable?
- Does the RSE curriculum reflect national guidance, local priorities and pupils' needs?
- Are all pupils being taught the curriculum as intended?
- Is the quality of teaching consistent across all classes and does it exemplify best practice?
- Are the RSE resources used suitable and accessible?
- Does there need to be changes made following feedback received from the parents or carers?

12.3 Our school will review this local protocol annually to ensure it continues to reflect its best practice and that it meets the requirements of the Witherslack Group Relationships and Sex (RSE) Policy.

13. REFERENCES

- Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- 16 to 19 study programmes guidance: 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK
- Regulating independent schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- [Withdrawn] Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Preventing bullying - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Three steps to RSHE success | sexeducationforum.org.uk
- Advice & Guidance | sexeducationforum.org.uk
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- National curriculum in England: framework for key stages 1 to 4 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Jigsawpshe.online/community

14. ASSOCIATED FORMS

Consultation letter
Right to withdraw letter

15. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Key Content
APPENDIX 2: Compulsory Aspects
APPENDIX 3: Curriculum Map

APPENDIX 1

The school's curriculum is planned and carefully sequenced so that key content is taught at an age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate stage for each pupil. The statutory content outlined below is drawn from the Department for Education's guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (Revised July 2025, effective from September 2026).
This appendix outlines content specific to Relationships Education and RSE. It does not include related statutory content taught through the National Curriculum for Science or Health Education, which are referenced separately.

Primary phase – Relationships Education. By the end of primary school, pupils should know:

Families and people who care for me

- That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- The characteristics of healthy family life, including commitment, care, protection and support for children and other family members.
- That families may look different to each other, but that families of all forms can provide a nurturing environment built on love and care.
- That stable, caring relationships of different types are central to children's wellbeing and security.
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment intended to be lifelong, and that in England and Wales marriage is available to both opposite-sex and same-sex couples.
- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice.
-

Caring friendships

- The importance of friendships in supporting happiness, wellbeing and a sense of belonging.
- The characteristics of positive friendships, including kindness, trust, honesty, loyalty, generosity, shared interests and support.
- That healthy friendships are inclusive, respectful and do not involve isolation or exclusion.
- That friendships may experience difficulties and that conflict can be managed without resorting to violence.
- How to recognise trust, manage conflict, and seek help or advice when friendships are problematic.

Respectful relationships

- The importance of respecting others, including those who are different or who hold different beliefs or preferences.
- Practical ways to build and maintain respectful relationships in different contexts.
- The importance of self-respect and how this contributes to wellbeing.
- That everyone should expect and show respect, including towards those in positions of authority.
- Different forms of bullying (including cyberbullying), their impact, and the importance of reporting concerns.

- What stereotypes are and how they can be harmful or unfair.
- The concept of permission-seeking and giving in everyday interactions and relationships.

Online relationships

- That people may behave differently online and may misrepresent themselves.
- That the same expectations of respectful behaviour apply online as offline.
- How to keep safe online, including recognising risks, harmful content and unwanted contact.
- How to critically evaluate online friendships and information, particularly where people are unknown.
- How information and data are shared and used online.

Being safe

- Appropriate boundaries in friendships and other relationships, including online contexts.
- The concept of privacy and understanding when it is right to share concerns.
- That each person's body belongs to them, including correct terminology for body parts to support safeguarding and communication.
- The differences between appropriate and inappropriate physical or other contact.
- How to respond safely to adults and others they do not know, both online and offline.
- How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or uncomfortable.
- How to seek help for themselves or others and continue to ask for help until they are heard.
- Where to access advice and support, including from family, school and external services.

Sex Education (Primary)

Schools may choose to include additional age-appropriate sex education content beyond statutory requirements. Oversands School will be delivering Sex Education in-line with Government Guidance as we believe it is part of high-quality relationship and health education.

Secondary phase (and Post-16 where applicable)

At secondary school (and Post-16 where applicable), pupils should build on primary learning and also know:

Families

- That there are different forms of committed, stable relationships and their role in human happiness and child-rearing.
- The legal status of marriage and other long-term relationships
- Why marriage must be freely entered into and why it is an important choice for many
- The roles and responsibilities of parenting
- How to assess trustworthiness, identify unsafe relationships, and seek help or advice for themselves or others.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

- The characteristics of healthy friendships and non-sexual relationships, including boundaries, consent, trust and mutual respect.
- How to challenge stereotypes, including those linked to sex, gender, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation.
- That everyone has the right to respect and equality under the law.
- Different forms of bullying and harassment, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.
- That some behaviours within relationships are criminal, including coercive control, exploitation and violence.

Online and media

- Rights and responsibilities in online spaces.
- Risks associated with online activity, including sharing images or information.
- The impact of harmful and sexually explicit content, including pornography.
- That sharing or viewing indecent images of children is a criminal offence.
- Emerging online risks, including misinformation, AI-generated content and deepfakes.
- How data is generated, collected and used online.

Being safe

- The legal framework around consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, harassment, domestic abuse and harmful practices.
- How consent is given, recognised and withdrawn in all contexts, including online.
- How to report concerns and access appropriate support.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- The characteristics of healthy intimate relationships.
- The impact of relationships and sexual choices on physical, emotional and mental health.
- Reproductive health, fertility and menopause.
- Contraceptive choices and effectiveness.
- Pregnancy, miscarriage and available options, taught with medically and legally accurate, impartial information.
- Sexually transmitted infections, transmission, prevention and testing.
- How alcohol and drugs can affect decision-making and risk.
- How and where to access confidential advice and healthcare.

Related statutory content:

Related content in the National Curriculum for Science at Key Stages 1-4

INSERT BELOW CURRICULUM CONTENT RELEVANT TO THE AGE RESISTRATION OF YOUR SCHOOL

Related content in the Health Education curriculum as part of PSHE and Citizenship at Key Stages 1-4

INSERT BELOW CURRICULUM CONTENT RELATED TO THE AGE REGISTRATION OF YOUR SCHOOL

APPENDIX 2

Please see below an overview of the compulsory aspects (as set out by the DfE) of RSE, within the different stages of education.

	KS1 (Years 1-2)	KS2 (Years 3-6)	KS3 (Years 7-9)	KS4 (Years 10-11)	KS5 (Years 12-13)
Relationship education	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Not statutory, but schools are expected to support personal development and wellbeing
PSHE - Health education	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	**PSHE remains compulsory in independent schools**; personal development activity required in 16–19 study programmes
Science - reproduction education	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	Must be taught – no right to withdrawal	**Not applicable** (no statutory science curriculum requirement post-16)
Sex education (beyond the	Schools can choose	Schools can choose	Must be taught –	Must be taught –	**Not statutory**; may be offered as part of

compulsory Health and Science aspects of the curriculum)	whether to teach this – parents can withdraw	whether to teach this – parents can withdraw	parents can withdraw	parents can withdraw until three terms before a child's 16th birthday	PSHE, enrichment or preparation for adulthood

Post-16 / Key Stage 5 Pupils

The Independent School Standards require schools to provide Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education and to ensure that, where pupils are above compulsory school age, there is a programme of activities appropriate to their needs that prepares them for adult life. While Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is not statutory for post-16 pupils, schools are expected to support pupils' personal development, wellbeing and readiness for adulthood.

The Department for Education's 16–19 study programme guidance states that all students should take part in meaningful non-qualification activity, tailored to individual need, which may include activities that develop confidence, character, resilience and life skills. These principles apply equally to students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

In line with the SEND Code of Practice (0–25), some young people aged 16 and over may have RSE-related outcomes identified within their EHCPs, particularly as part of their preparation for adulthood. The Code of Practice also clarifies that from the end of compulsory school age, the legal right to make decisions and requests under the Children and Families Act 2014 applies to the young person themselves, rather than their parents.

Schools within the Witherslack Group have therefore chosen to continue to offer RSE for post-16 pupils, as part of a broader PSHE programme, to reflect pupils' developmental needs, support SEND outcomes, and ensure progression from secondary education.

APPENDIX 3

Please see below our Curriculum Map which shows when RSE related content is taught within this academic year (please ensure this reflects RSE content only and covers 2026-27):

Class / Year Group	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1 / Ages 5–6	PSHE – Feeling special and safe, being part of a class, rights and responsibilities, consequences	PSHE – Similarities and differences, understanding bullying, making new friends, celebrating differences		PSHE – Keeping healthy, being safe, medicine safety, household safety, road safety	PSHE – Belonging to a family, making friends, physical contact preferences, people who help us, qualities as a friend, special relationships	PSHE – Life cycles, changes since being a baby, differences between female and male bodies using correct terminology, coping with change
Year 2 /	PSHE – Safe and fair learning	PSHE – Gender stereotypes,		PSHE – Healthier choices,	PSHE – Different types of family,	PSHE – Life cycles, growing from young to old, increasing

Ages 6–7	environment, valuing contributions, choices, recognising feelings	understanding bullying, standing up for self and others, making new friends, diversity		relaxation, healthy eating and nutrition	physical contact boundaries, friendship and conflict, secrets, trust and appreciation, special relationships	independence, differences between female and male bodies using correct terminology, assertiveness
Year 3 / Ages 7–8	PSHE – Self-identity and worth, responsible choices, seeing things from others' perspectives	PSHE – Families and their differences, family conflict, witnessing bullying, recognising hurtful words, giving and receiving compliments		PSHE – Attitudes towards drugs, keeping safe online and offline, respect for myself and others, healthy and safe choices	PSHE – Family roles and responsibilities, friendship and negotiation, keeping safe online, being a global citizen, how choices affect others, appreciation for family and friends	PSHE – How babies grow, understanding a baby's needs, outside and inside body changes, family stereotypes, challenging ideas
Year 4 / Ages 8–9	PSHE – Being part of a class team, being a school citizen, rights and responsibilities, group decision-making, behaviour choices	PSHE – Challenging assumptions, judging by appearance, accepting self and others, understanding bullying, problem-solving, first impressions		PSHE – Healthier friendships, group dynamics, smoking, alcohol and vaping, assertiveness, peer pressure	PSHE – Jealousy, love and loss, getting and falling out, girlfriends and boyfriends, showing appreciation to others	PSHE – Being unique, having a baby, girls and puberty, confidence in change, accepting change
Year 5 / Ages 9–10	PSHE – Rights and responsibilities, how behaviour affects groups, democracy, having a voice	PSHE – Cultural differences, racism, rumours and name-calling, types of bullying, respecting other cultures		PSHE – Smoking and vaping, alcohol, anti-social behaviour, emergency aid, body image, relationships with food, healthy choices	PSHE – Self-recognition and self-worth, building self-esteem, safer online communities, online rights and responsibilities, online gaming and gambling, reducing screen time, dangers of online grooming,	PSHE – Self and body image, influence of online media on body image, puberty for girls, puberty for boys, conception including IVF, growing responsibility, coping with change

					SMARRT internet safety rules	
Year 6 / Ages 10–11	PSHE – Children's universal rights, feeling welcome and valued, choices and consequences, group dynamics, anti-social behaviour, role-modelling	PSHE – Perceptions of normality, understanding disability, power struggles, bullying, inclusion and exclusion, conflict and celebration of difference, empathy		PSHE – Taking personal responsibility, how substances affect the body, exploitation including county lines and gang culture, emotional and mental health, managing stress	PSHE – Mental health, identifying worries and sources of support, love and loss, managing feelings, power and control, assertiveness, technology safety, responsible technology use	PSHE – Self-image, body image, puberty and feelings, conception to birth, physical attraction, respect and consent, boyfriends/girlfriends, sexting, transition

Class / Year Group	**Autumn 1**	**Autumn 2**	**Spring 1**	**Spring 2**	**Summer 1**	**Summer 2**
Year 7	PSHE – Identity, differences and conflict, influences, belonging to a group, peer pressure, child-on-child abuse, online safety, sexting, online legislation and online identity	PSHE – Prejudice and discrimination, Equality Act 2010, bystanders, assertiveness, challenging negative behaviours, stereotypes, human rights, inclusion, bullying, exclusion and respect	PSHE – Gang culture, knife crime and county lines		PSHE – Changing relationships, consent, healthy relationships, friendships, social media vs reality, authenticity online, personal space, setting boundaries, healthy and unhealthy relationships	PSHE – Puberty changes, reproduction facts, menstrual cycle, responsibilities of parenthood, IVF, committed relationships and families, rights of the child, media and self-esteem, self-image, FGM, hormones and moods
Year 8	PSHE – Self-identity, online influence, family and identity, managing	PSHE – Prejudice and persecution, LGBT bullying, Equality Act, social justice and hate crimes,	PSHE – Keeping safe online, online scams, sextortion, taking risks		PSHE – AI and media influence, maintaining positive relationships, assertiveness, sexting and	PSHE – Close intimate relationships, healthy and unhealthy romantic relationships,

Class / Year Group	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	expectations, personal beliefs and judgements, marriage, civil partnerships and the law, protected characteristics, online and offline identity	multiculturalism, religious tolerance, standing up for what you believe in, celebrating difference	and staying safe online		sextortion, power dynamics, social media platforms, inclusion and equality	harassment, attraction, love or lust, sexuality, pornography and the law, unwanted messages, alcohol, risky behaviour and the law
Year 9	PSHE – Being in a group, peer approval, perceptions about intimate relationships, consent and personal safety, sexual exploitation, grooming, radicalisation, county lines, self-esteem, identity, managing risk online and offline, social media, abuse and coercive control	PSHE – Prejudice, LGBT+ phobia, banter and bullying, equality, cyberbullying and harassment, bias, discrimination, harassment, victimisation and non-consensual behaviours	PSHE – Body image, changing appearances, cosmetic surgery, weight loss products, social media, self-esteem, deepfakes, AI, harmful and illegal online content, misogyny	PSHE – Personal safety, drugs and alcohol, belonging, loneliness, inclusion, mental health support, drugs and the law	PSHE – Equity and equality, healthy and unhealthy relationships, power dynamics, pornography, contraception, pregnancy, STIs, consent, intimate relationships and Gillick competence	PSHE – Managing emotions, self-expression, body image, masculinity, online influence, misogyny, incel culture, healthy and unhealthy online communities, mental health and addiction
Year 10	PSHE – Online safety, social media risks, algorithms, online data, GDPR, the dark web, managing online content, disturbing online content, sharing or enhancing images, personal data,	PSHE – Human rights, Equality Act 2010, hidden disabilities, discrimination, inequality, equality in relationships, empowered and disempowered relationships, changing and ending relationships	PSHE – Nurturing important relationships, real versus online behaviours, social media use and online reputation	PSHE – Sexual health, STIs, HIV/Aids, safer sex, contraception, substance use and mental health	PSHE – Long-term relationships and legal status, attraction, relationship with self, why relationships end, unsafe/toxic relationships, marriage, cohabitation, media and pornography, stalking, harassment,	PSHE – Independence and personal safety, alcohol and drink spiking, gender stereotypes in romantic relationships, virginity testing and hymenoplasty, physical and emotional changes,

Class / Year Group	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
	AI chatbots and online scams				coercion, abuse, pressure, sex trafficking and modern slavery	family change and sources of support
Year 11	PSHE – Becoming an adult, age limits and the law, relationships and the law, consent, coercive control, domestic abuse, honour-based violence, arranged and forced marriages, internet law, legal age limits and pornography, social media concerns and sexting		PSHE – Long-term family goals, marriage, civil partnership, parenting and developing resilience	PSHE – Self-worth, identity, relationships, consent, power imbalance, being ready for sex, coercion, contraception, sexual health, STIs, emergency contraception, reproductive health, fertility, pregnancy choices, adoption, abortion, bringing up a baby, pregnancy support, loss and miscarriage	PSHE – Stages of a relationship, relationships in the media, perceptions about sex and relationships, LGBT terminology, gender identity and expression, sexuality, Equality Act 2010, LGBT+ rights, coming out, unbalanced relationships, domestic abuse, my body/my choice, FGM, challenging social norms, breast ironing/flattening and power in relationships	