

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

September 2026

*Nothing is beyond our reach!
Care and challenge engage and motivate us!
Praise reassures and supports us!
Successes are celebrated and built on!*

Approved by	Governing Board
Date approved	Autumn 2026
Policy lead	Julia Ellis
Review date	Autumn 2027

This policy has been rewritten to reflect the Department for Education statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education that came into effect on 1 September 2026.

1. Purpose and vision

At Norton Community Primary School, RSHE forms an important part of our commitment to helping every child become a safe, healthy, confident, respectful and responsible member of the community. It supports our safeguarding culture and our vision that nothing is beyond our reach.

Our RSHE provision is inclusive, age and developmentally appropriate, carefully sequenced and grounded in positive relationships, wellbeing, respect, equality and personal safety.

2. Aims

- Provide a safe framework in which sensitive and age-appropriate discussions can take place.
- Help pupils develop safe, caring and respectful relationships and understand the importance of kindness, honesty, trust and healthy boundaries.
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of growing up, including puberty and menstruation, and promote health, hygiene and wellbeing.
- Help pupils develop self-respect, confidence, resilience, empathy and the ability to express their needs and boundaries assertively and respectfully.
- Teach pupils accurate vocabulary for their bodies, including the correct names for private body parts.
- Enable pupils to recognise unsafe situations, harmful behaviour and abuse, including online, and know how and where to seek help.
- Develop pupils' understanding of privacy, personal information and respectful online behaviour.
- Reflect positively and sensitively the range of families represented in school and wider society, without stigmatising any child because of their home circumstances.
- Enable pupils to make informed, responsible decisions about their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

3. Statutory requirements

Norton Community Primary School is a maintained primary school. Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory for pupils receiving primary education. The school must also teach the statutory National Curriculum for science, including relevant content about the human body, growth, puberty and reproduction.

The school has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, revised guidance effective from 1 September 2026, issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. The statutory framework also includes the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

Sex education beyond the National Curriculum for science is not compulsory in primary schools. Where Norton Community Primary School chooses to teach additional sex education, it will be age-appropriate, clearly identified to parents in advance and subject to the parental right to request withdrawal described in this policy.

4. Policy development, consultation and review

This policy is developed and reviewed through consultation with staff, pupils, parents and the governing board. Our process includes:

- Review of current statutory guidance, safeguarding guidance, curriculum requirements and relevant school policies.
- Staff consultation and opportunities for staff to recommend changes.
- Meaningful, age-appropriate pupil voice to help ensure the curriculum is relevant, well sequenced and responsive to pupils' needs.
- Proactive parent/carer consultation, including clear information about curriculum content and opportunities to raise questions or concerns.
- Governing board consideration, approval and oversight.

The policy will be reviewed at least annually during the initial implementation of the 2026 guidance, and thereafter in line with the school policy cycle or sooner where statutory guidance, local need or the school curriculum changes. The current policy will be published on the school website and a copy will be provided free of charge on request.

5. Definition and guiding principles

RSHE is the planned teaching of relationships, health and wellbeing and, where applicable, age-appropriate sex education. It supports pupils' emotional, social, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and helps them recognise when something is not right and seek help.

Our curriculum is guided by seven principles: meaningful pupil engagement; engagement and transparency with parents; a positive approach; careful sequencing; relevance and responsiveness to pupils' needs; skilled, participative teaching; and a whole-school approach linked to safeguarding, behaviour, equality, online safety and wellbeing.

6. Curriculum

The detailed curriculum is set out in the school's curriculum documents and is available through the school website. Norton Community Primary School currently uses the 3D PSHE Whole School Primary Programme as a

core resource. The school remains responsible for ensuring that all teaching and resources meet the statutory requirements. Materials will therefore be mapped, supplemented or adapted where necessary to reflect the September 2026 statutory guidance and the needs of our pupils.

RSHE is primarily taught through PSHE. Relevant biological content is taught through science, and learning is reinforced through computing/online safety, PE, RE and the wider curriculum where appropriate. Teaching is carefully sequenced so that knowledge and skills build progressively.

6.1 Relationships Education

By the end of primary school, teaching will cover the statutory areas of:

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

Within these areas pupils learn about safe and happy family life; friendship; loneliness; managing conflict without violence; kindness and respect; assertiveness; healthy boundaries; bullying and stereotypes; privacy; personal information; rights over their own bodies; appropriate and inappropriate contact; recognising harmful or dangerous relationships; recognising emotional, physical and sexual abuse in an age-appropriate way; identifying trusted adults; reporting concerns; and continuing to seek help until they are heard.

Teaching about families will recognise sensitively that families take many forms, including single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, kinship carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. Pupils will learn to respect differences and understand that safe, caring relationships are central to family life.

6.2 Online safety and awareness

Online safety is woven through RSHE and the Computing curriculum. Pupils will learn that the same expectations of respectful behaviour apply online and offline. Age-appropriate teaching will include privacy and location settings, personal information, peer pressure, respectful communication, online bullying and harassment, recognising harmful content or contact, the possibility that people may pretend to be someone else online, risks associated with sharing images or information, age restrictions on social media and other services, and how to report concerns and seek help from a trusted adult.

Health Education will also support pupils to understand the positive and negative effects of the internet, excessive screen time, online gaming and monetisation, scams and fraud, targeted information and the impact of online content on mental and physical wellbeing.

6.3 Health Education and wellbeing

Health Education is compulsory. The school's curriculum will cover the required primary content by the end of Key Stage 2, including:

- general mental and emotional wellbeing, feelings, loneliness, change, loss and bereavement
- wellbeing online and healthy use of technology
- physical health and fitness
- healthy eating and a healthy relationship with food
- the risks of harmful substances, including smoking, vaping, alcohol, drugs and nicotine products
- health protection and prevention, including sleep, dental health, hygiene, germs, vaccination and sun safety

- personal safety around hazards, roads, railways and water
- basic first aid and how to make an effective emergency call
- developing bodies, the human lifecycle, puberty and menstruation

Pupils will be taught correct anatomical terms, including penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and nipples, in a factual and age-appropriate way. They will understand that private body parts are private and will develop the language, confidence and skills to express boundaries and seek help.

Puberty and menstruation will be taught before pupils are likely to experience these changes. The school will make sensitive practical arrangements to support pupils in managing menstruation and accessing menstrual products.

6.4 Science and primary sex education

The statutory science curriculum includes relevant content about living things, growth and development, the human lifecycle, puberty and reproduction in some plants and animals. Pupils cannot be withdrawn from statutory science.

Primary sex education beyond science is not compulsory. The Department for Education recommends that primary schools teach sex education in Year 5 and/or Year 6 in line with conception and birth content. Where Norton Community Primary School provides any additional sex education, the school will consult parents about the content, explain when and how it will be taught, share relevant materials on request and remind parents of their right to request withdrawal from this additional content.

7. Teaching and learning

RSHE will be delivered by staff who are appropriately trained and confident to create a safe, supportive and participative learning environment. Teachers will establish clear ground rules, use age-appropriate distancing techniques where helpful and ensure pupils know how confidentiality works in lessons.

Teaching will be factual, balanced, inclusive and sensitive to pupils' age, maturity, background and experience. The school will not use fear or alarm as an educational tool. Staff will challenge prejudice, bullying and harmful stereotypes while modelling respectful language and behaviour.

8. Managing questions

Pupils are encouraged to ask questions. Teachers will respond honestly, factually and in an age- and developmentally-appropriate way. Where a question falls outside planned primary content, is unsuitable for whole-class discussion, or concerns sex education from which a pupil has been withdrawn, staff may respond individually, encourage the pupil to speak with a parent or trusted adult, or signpost appropriate support. Questions that raise a safeguarding concern will be dealt with under the school's safeguarding procedures. The aim is to support pupils so that unanswered questions do not lead them to unsafe or inappropriate sources of information online.

9. Safeguarding and confidentiality

RSHE is an important part of the school's safeguarding provision. It helps pupils recognise when something is wrong, understand privacy and boundaries, identify abuse and unsafe behaviour, and know how to report concerns and seek help.

All staff must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and current Keeping Children Safe in Education requirements. If a pupil makes a disclosure or a member of staff has a concern about a child's

welfare, staff will act immediately and report it to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or deputy in accordance with school procedures. Staff must never promise a child absolute confidentiality.

Pupils will be told in age-appropriate language that there may be circumstances in which staff need to share information with the people who can help to keep them safe. Where an external visitor is used, safeguarding and reporting arrangements will be agreed with the visitor before the session.

10. Equality, inclusion and SEND

The school will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. RSHE will be taught in a way that does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment. Teaching promotes equality, dignity and respect and challenges prejudice, bullying and harmful stereotypes.

We recognise that pupils come from a wide range of family structures and backgrounds. Teaching about families will include, in an age-appropriate way, different family arrangements, including same-sex parents, alongside other family structures.

RSHE will be accessible to all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Teaching methods, vocabulary, resources, pacing and opportunities for repetition or reinforcement will be adapted as necessary so that pupils can understand and apply essential relationships, health and safeguarding messages. Staff will recognise that some pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to bullying, exploitation, abuse or harmful sexual behaviour and may require additional support.

11. Parents and carers: engagement and access to materials

Parents and carers are the first educators of their children and are important partners in RSHE. The school will proactively communicate what is taught and provide opportunities for parents to discuss curriculum content and raise questions or concerns.

Parents can request to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE. The school will make a representative sample available proactively and will respond positively to requests to see materials. Where copyright applies, access may be provided through an appropriate parent portal, presentation or supervised viewing arrangement and parents may be asked not to copy or redistribute protected materials. Copyright will not be used as a reason to refuse access to materials.

Where the school needs to respond to an emerging issue by teaching content that represents a significant departure from the published policy or usual sequence, parents will be informed in advance and relevant materials will be made available on request.

12. Parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education

Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education, Health Education or statutory National Curriculum science, including science content related to puberty or reproduction.

Where the school provides sex education beyond the statutory science curriculum, a parent may request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of that additional sex education. At primary school, the Headteacher will grant such a request.

Before withdrawal, the Headteacher will offer to discuss the request with the parent and, where appropriate, the child, to clarify the nature and purpose of the teaching and the potential effects of withdrawal. The school will keep an appropriate record. Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Pupils who are withdrawn will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

13. External visitors, organisations and resources

External organisations may enhance the curriculum by bringing specialist knowledge or expertise, but Norton Community Primary School always remains responsible for the curriculum and for the way pupils are taught.

Before using an external provider or resource, the school will check that it is accurate, age and stage appropriate, accessible, unbiased and consistent with this policy and safeguarding requirements. The school will check the credentials of visitors, see lesson plans and materials in advance, agree safeguarding and confidentiality arrangements, and ensure that materials can be made available to parents in accordance with statutory guidance. The school will not agree to contractual restrictions that prevent parents from viewing materials used with their children.

14. Roles and responsibilities

14.1 Governing board

- Approve this policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.
- Ensure that curriculum content and teaching materials align with statutory guidance.
- Ensure pupils make progress towards the expected outcomes and that teaching is accessible to pupils with SEND.
- Ensure parents receive clear information about subject content, materials, external providers and withdrawal rights.
- Receive appropriate monitoring information about RSHE provision.

14.2 Headteacher

- Ensure RSHE is taught consistently and effectively across the school.
- Ensure curriculum and resources remain compliant with current statutory guidance.
- Ensure staff receive appropriate training and support.
- Manage parental requests for withdrawal from additional primary sex education.
- Ensure safeguarding concerns arising from RSHE are handled under school procedures.

14.3 RSHE/PSHE lead

- Lead curriculum mapping, sequencing and evaluation.
- Monitor planning, teaching, pupil work, assessment and pupil voice.
- Support staff with resources, subject knowledge and difficult questions.
- Keep the Headteacher and governing board informed of relevant curriculum and statutory developments.

14.4 Staff

- Deliver RSHE sensitively, factually and inclusively.
- Model positive attitudes, respectful behaviour and appropriate language.
- Adapt teaching to meet pupils' needs, including SEND.
- Monitor learning and respond to misconceptions.
- Follow safeguarding procedures promptly when concerns arise.
- Respect agreed arrangements for pupils withdrawn from additional sex education.

Staff do not have a right to opt out of teaching statutory RSHE. Staff with concerns about teaching particular content should discuss these with the Headteacher so that training and support can be provided.

14.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage positively with RSHE, follow agreed ground rules and treat others with respect and sensitivity. Pupils will be encouraged to contribute appropriately to pupil voice and curriculum evaluation.

15. Staff training

RSHE is included within staff induction and continuing professional development. Training will address curriculum knowledge, age-appropriate pedagogy, handling sensitive or difficult questions, safeguarding and disclosures, SEND accessibility and the safe use of resources and external providers. Where appropriate, the Headteacher may commission training or advice from suitably qualified external professionals.

16. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation

Pupil learning will be assessed in ways appropriate to the subject and age of pupils, with regular opportunities to identify misconceptions and where additional support is needed. Class teachers will monitor pupil progress through the school's assessment systems.

The delivery and impact of RSHE will be monitored by Julia Ellis through a combination of curriculum mapping, planning scrutiny, learning walks, review of pupils' work, pupil voice, assessment information and feedback from staff and parents where appropriate. Findings will be used to strengthen provision and will be reported to the Headteacher and governing board as appropriate.

17. Links with other policies and guidance

This policy should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equality information/objectives, SEND Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Computing curriculum, Science curriculum and PSHE curriculum. It should also be read alongside current statutory guidance including Keeping Children Safe in Education, the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years and the Equality Act 2010.

18. References

- Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance, revised guidance effective 1 September 2026.
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017, sections 34 and 35.
- Education Act 2002, section 80A; Education Act 1996, section 403.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education, current edition.
- Department for Education and Department of Health, SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.