

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) - led by Miss J Adams



Aims and Objectives

At Howley Grange we believe that the essential aim of relationship, sex and health education should be to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills, confidence and self-esteem to enable them to make informed and responsible choices about healthy relationships, both online and offline, now and in later life.

We want our pupils to understand what constitutes a healthy relationship: friendships, family relationships, relationships with adults and peers, to respect others, and to treat others with kindness, consideration and fairness.

We want pupils to understand and uphold personal boundaries, privacy and safety (including online).

Our curriculum should prepare (where appropriate) for the changes of adolescence (puberty, the human lifecycle) in a sensitive, age-appropriate way.

We should also support pupils' mental and emotional well-being by linking positive relationships to emotional health.

Relationship, sex and health education should be taught within a climate of trust, respect and appropriate confidentiality, in which pupils and adults feel able to talk openly and honestly. Issues raised by children will be dealt with honestly, taking into account the maturity of the child.

Definition & scope of RSHE

- **Relationships Education** covers: friendships; family relationships; relationships with other children and adults; respect, kindness, fairness; privacy and boundaries; online relationships and behaviours.
- **Sex Education**, if provided, covers the human life cycle (conception, birth) and the changes of puberty. It does *not* include detailed instruction on sexual intercourse, contraception or STIs in primary schools (unless the school decides age-appropriately).
- **Health Education** covers: physical health and mental wellbeing.
- We will ensure the programme is developmentally appropriate and takes account of pupils' age, maturity, cultural and religious backgrounds, and any special educational needs or disabilities.

Curriculum content & delivery (see appendix)

Relationships Education (all year-groups)

Pupils will learn about:

- the concepts of family, including different family types and other family relationships;
- the features of healthy friendships and relationships: mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, kindness, generosity, integrity and fairness;
- how to treat others with respect, take turns and share, resolve conflict in friendships;
- personal boundaries and privacy: understanding what appropriate and inappropriate contact is (physical or other), including online;

- how to recognise when relationships are less healthy or unsafe, and how to seek help or report concerns;
- safe and respectful behaviour online, including the sharing of information and images, data usage, and recognising risks.

Sex Education (Year 6)

- In Year 6 we will offer a sex-education component, giving pupils the knowledge to: understand and anticipate the physical and emotional changes of puberty; know how a baby is conceived and born (drawing on the national curriculum science content) in an age-appropriate way.
- We will explicitly inform parents/carers of the content to be covered in these sessions and provide opportunities for them to ask questions and view teaching materials.
- Withdrawal: Parents/carers may request that their child be withdrawn from those sex education lessons (but not from Relationships Education). The school will comply with such requests.

Health Education (all year groups).

- What good physical health and mental wellbeing look like, including the link between the two.
- How to recognise normal changes, issues, or concerns in themselves or others.
- How and when to seek appropriate help, as early as possible.
- How to maintain healthy lifestyles, including healthy eating, exercise, sleep, hygiene, and self-regulation.
- How their bodies change, including puberty (which must be taught before onset)

Statutory requirements

- For primary schools, Relationships and Health Education is **compulsory**.
- Sex Education (beyond the required scientific curriculum) is **not compulsory** in primary schools, but the guidance recommends schools consider offering it in Years 5 & 6 in an age-appropriate way.
- Where a school chooses to deliver sex education beyond the national curriculum science, the school must set out in policy what is covered and must consult parents. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from those sex-education lessons (in primary).
- Schools must have regard to the statutory guidance in developing and delivering their programmes.

Delivery approach

- RSHE is embedded within the broader PSHE curriculum.
- Lessons will be delivered by class teachers and will use a range of teaching methods suitable for young children: discussion, stories, role-play, circle time, group work, digital resources etc.
- Teaching will be inclusive, respectful of diverse family structures, and avoid stigma. We will recognise and respect pupils' cultural, religious and familial backgrounds while ensuring that the statutory outcomes are met.

- The programme will be delivered across the curriculum, not solely within one subject, and linked to personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and citizenship.
- Children will be supported to develop self-respect and empathy for others, recognising differences and challenging stereotypes, misogyny, everyday sexism, homophobia and transphobia. (As referenced in the new guidance.)

Roles & responsibilities

- The governors: ensure the policy is in place, published, consulted on, reviewed and monitored.
- The headteacher/senior leadership: ensure staff training, curriculum delivery, resources, oversight, inclusion of RSE within the whole-school approach.
- RSHE/PSHE lead: coordinate curriculum planning, review content, liaise with staff, parents and pupils, evaluate and monitor.
- All staff: will deliver RSHE in accordance with the policy to their own class, maintain professionalism and inclusive practice, address pupils' questions, refer concerns to the DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) if needed.
- Parents/carers: are kept informed of the programme, consulted where required, and have the right to withdraw their child from the sex-education component.
- Pupils: will engage in lessons, show respect for each other, ask questions appropriately, and reflect on their learning.

Dealing with difficult questions

- Pupils may ask questions beyond the planned content. Teachers will use their professional judgement to decide whether to deal with a question in class, defer to a later time, address one-to-one or involve parents as appropriate.
- If a question is deemed inappropriate for the age group, or relates to explicit sexual activity, the teacher may decline to answer in front of the class and agree to follow up individually or refer to parents.
- Any safeguarding concern raised during RSHE must be referred immediately to the DSL following normal safeguarding procedures.

Parents' right to withdraw

- For primary school pupils: Parents/carers may withdraw their child from **sex education** lessons (beyond the national curriculum science) but *not* from Relationships and Health Education or the science curriculum.
- The school will provide written notice to parents/carers of the sex-education content and withdrawal process.
- If a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide alternative, age-appropriate work for that child.
- The school will document withdrawals and review the decision if the parent/carer requests again.

Confidentiality

Where possible a child's confidentiality will be maintained, but the child must be aware that the confidentiality may be broken if it is thought necessary, but that their best interests will be maintained. The Safe Guarding Lead should be consulted if it is thought that the child is at risk in any way. (See Child Protection Policy.)

This policy is supported by other school policies and should be read in conjunction with the following;

Child Protection Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Equal Opportunities for All Policy
Anti-bullying policy
PSHE Policy
Behaviour Policy
Online-safety Policy
Confidentiality Policy
Keeping Children Safe in education

Reviewed March 2026. This policy has been developed with regard to the DfE statutory guidance (2019, updated 2025).

J Adams
Next review March 2027

Appendix (from the DfE guidance)

Relationships Education

Families and people who care for

1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.
2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.
5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.

6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.

2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.

3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.

4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.

5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.

6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.

7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.

Respectful, kind relationships

1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.

2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.

3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.

4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.

5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.

6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.

7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.

8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.

9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.

10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.

11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust

Online safety and awareness

1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.

2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.

3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.

4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.

5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.

6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.

Being Safe

1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.

2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.

3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.

4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.

5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.

6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.

7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

Primary health and wellbeing:

General wellbeing:

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.
2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.
7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.
8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.
9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

Wellbeing online

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.
2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.
3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.
6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.
7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.
8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.
9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.

10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.

11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

Physical health and fitness:

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.
3. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

Healthy eating

1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
3. The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
4. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping

1. The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.

Health protection and prevention

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.
4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check ups at the dentist.
5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

Personal safety

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.
2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

Basic first aid

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

Developing bodies

1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.
2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.