

DARRICK WOOD SCHOOL
RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed:	November 2025
Agreed:	November 2025
Next Review:	November 2026
Person Responsible:	The Governing Body

MISSION STATEMENT:

To provide effective, relevant and responsible Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to all pupils.

Goals

Customer Goal:

To assure that parents and pupils are aware that RSE will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of pupils where pupils feel safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to RSE.

Curriculum Goal:

To deliver an RSE curriculum as part of the School's Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHEE) curriculum and other relevant subject areas (e.g. Science, RS).

Community Goal:

To provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life at school or at home and are empowered to make well informed decisions regarding relationships and sex.

Quality Goal:

To monitor and evaluate the School's provision for RSE and to strive to improve this to ensure it remains effective, relevant and responsible.

1. Introduction

A new framework for RSE became statutory in September 2020. This policy sets out how Darrick Wood School meets the requirements of the framework in ensuring the RSE provision at the School is concerned with lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It ensures RSE is about teaching sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. It is also about teaching what it is to be in a caring, stable and mutually supportive relationship with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship. RSE will outline the importance of marriage for family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society. The School has been teaching RSE using the above guidelines since required and has implemented them into the PSHE curriculum.

In 2024, the government proposed a further change on certain subjects and topics only being taught to certain age groups to ensure that appropriate material is being taught. This is currently being looked at in parliament with a start date proposed of Sept 2025. This will be implemented for first teaching in September 2026.

The School would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE we are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions and responsible choices as they grow up.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We hope to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after.

2. Roles and responsibilities

2.1 School staff

It is important that school staff feel comfortable to take PSHEE classes and answer questions from pupils. If the teacher does not feel confident leading RSE discussions then that is likely to be reflected by the pupils, and their learning will be compromised. The School will provide professional development training in how to deliver RSE; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSE is so important. There are certain members of teaching staff, such as the AHT responsible for Personal Development, ACs and AACs who will hold more responsibility for ensuring that the School's RSE education is relevant to our pupils and effective.

2.2 Governors, SLT and the PSHE Coordinator will collectively:

- Develop this school policy and review it in line with the School's policy revision schedule in consultation with parents, pupils and staff ensuring that it meets the needs of the whole school community.
- Ensure the RSE Policy meets the September 2020 statutory guidance and is updated in accordance with any updates to this guidance. New changes will be implemented for September 2026.
- Ensure that all staff are given regular and ongoing training on issues relating to RSE and how to deliver lessons on these issues.
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to RSE.
- Provide support to staff members who feel uncomfortable or ill-equipped to deal with the delivery of sex education to pupils. This may be because they do not feel that their training has been adequate or that aspects of the curriculum conflict with their religious beliefs.
- Ensure that RSE is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding RSE to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive way.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing a balanced RSE in school.
- Communicate with staff and parents to ensure that everyone understands the School's policy and curriculum for sex education, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the School are listened to, taken into account and acted on as appropriate. We want the provision of RSE at home to be complementary to the provision the School provides, and this should be clearly communicated to parents and additional support given where necessary or requested.

2.3 PSHE staff will:

- Take it upon themselves to ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to the AHT responsible for Personal Development.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around sex education provision.
- Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a pupil comes to a member of staff with an issue that that member of staff feels they are not able to deal with alone, they should take this concern to their manager. If what the pupil has said causes concern of a safeguarding nature, members of staff must report this to a member of the safeguarding team.
- Liaise with the AHT responsible for Personal Development on their experience of teaching RSE and pupil response so that plans can be continually evaluated and improved.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs. If teachers need support in this area, they should speak to the Support Faculty.

2.4 Pupils

- Pupils are expected to attend RSE classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the School expects pupils to recognise this.
- Pupils should support one another with issues that arise through RSE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Pupils who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the School's Behaviour Policy.
- We also hope that pupils will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to sex education or otherwise. Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils will be held in confidence; however, staff must take concerns to the Safeguarding team if there is a safeguarding concern.

2.5 Parents/carers

- The school expects parents/carers to share the responsibility of RSE and to support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents/carers to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PSHE. Parents/carers will be made aware of the topics studied in RSE lessons via the School's website. Parents/carers are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the School where they feel it is needed.
- Parents will receive information home from the school on various issues and topics as part of the school bulletin. These will be relevant to PSHE themes studied and enable conversations at home on topics that may seem difficult.

3. Curriculum implementation

3.1 Introduction

It is important that we implement our RSE Policy consistently throughout the School and provide effective provision in all classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide classes that are specific to the needs of the pupils in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions regarding relationships and sex. It is important that pupils know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

3.2 Curriculum coverage

Below is the list of topics studied in RSE for each year group in KS3 and KS4:

Updated table:

Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4		Key Stage 5	Key Stage 5
Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13
Family Life	Parenthood	Relationships and conflict	Sex the basics	Contraception	Safer Sex	Sexual Health
Puberty	Marriage	Pregnancy	Menopause and Fertility	Coercion	Consent	Birth Control
Body Image	Gender	Social Media Pressures	Sexting	Online dangers	Taught in Tutor Time	Taught in Tutor Time
Friendships	Healthy Relationships	Sex and Relationships	STIs	Pornography		
FGM/ Child Marriage	Body Image	Body Image	Pornography	Sexuality		
Marriage			Coercion	Taught in a drop down day		
Relationships			Sex and Gender			
Self-Expression			Consent			
One Lesson per week	One lesson per week	One lesson per 2 weks	One lesson per week			

Guest speakers

We may invite guest speakers into school to talk on issues related to relationships and sex. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge pupils' perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these lessons. There are set companies we use for certain topics. In Year 8 the Protected Characteristics of Gender and Sexuality are explored in a session with Diversity Roles Models every year. In Year 9 Your Choice Your Voice will spend a day with the students completing various workshops.

Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and is not acceptable language to use.

Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the PSHE Coordinator.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- An anonymous question box; this will enable pupils to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified
- Making the classroom a zone of silence; this means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be brought up at any other time. We hope this will give pupils the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about relationships and sex.

Pupils with special educational needs

The School works hard to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of ability. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to RSE.

The School will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information. Some of these include:

- Interactive teaching methods e.g. games and quizzes
- Use of expert guest speakers
- Practical activities
- Using DVDs or video
- Group and paired activities.

Withdrawal from Sex Education

The School aims to keep parents/carers informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum and urges parents/carers to read this policy. Parents/carers can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the School will do everything it can to ensure that parents/carers are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school. Every effort is made for the teaching material to be factual and not influential as to not invade personal beliefs or ethics. It is, however, a statutory right of parents/carers to withdraw their children from the Sex Education element of RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, only Sex Education. This **excludes** withdrawal from the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum for Science.

If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from sex education lessons, they can do so after a formal meeting with the Head Teacher and if appropriate, the child. The Head Teacher will discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. Three terms prior to their 16th birthday, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the School should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Complaints

Parents/carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSE curriculum should contact the School and follow the School's Complaints Policy which is available on the School's website.

Equal opportunities

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted in accordance with the School's Equality and Diversity Policy. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the School's Behaviour Policy and Prevention of Bullying Policy.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should be followed.

If a staff member becomes aware that a pupil under 16 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- Ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active.
- Encourage the pupil to talk to their parent or carer. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the School will encourage this as much as possible.
- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from SENCO and Achievement Coordinator to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

Advice and treatment

Staff who are approached by pupils with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted infection should refer them immediately to School's safeguarding team.

Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the School's RSE provision. We also encourage parents/carers to engage their child in open discussion about practising safe sex.

4. Monitoring, review and evaluation

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we review the RSE curriculum yearly, and updates placed on our website and parents/carers informed.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our RSE provision through:

- Feedback from pupils
- Feedback from staff
- Classroom observations
- Behaviour for Learning Data
- Engagement for Learning Data

The School will review this policy in accordance with its policy revision schedule, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils and staff, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

5. Support

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

If parents or carers have any issues with the policy or they wish to discuss it further please contact the PSHE Coordinator for the school.

Related Policies

Behaviour Policy

Curriculum Policy

Equality and Diversity Policy

Prevention of Bullying Policy