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PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic)
and
RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) Policy
2026 - 2029

Adopted by

St Matthias C of E Primary School

This policy has been reviewed and updated by a Headteacher of the Trust. It is approved on a triennial basis by the Board and is to be adapted and implemented by all schools within the Trust.

This policy may be amended prior to the scheduled date of the next review to reflect changes in legislation where appropriate.

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In collaboration with

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1. Rationale and Ethos:

1.1 Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)

We teach Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education as a whole school approach to underpin children's development as people and because we believe that this also supports their learning capacity.

This also supports the 'Personal Development' and 'Behaviour and Attitudes' aspects within Ofsted's inspection framework and school inspection toolkit. It promotes positive behaviour, respect and inclusion, contributes to effective safeguarding, and supports the promotion of fundamental British values and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development.

An overview of this is available on the individual school website.

We value PSHE as one way to support children's development as human beings, to enable them to understand and respect who they are, to empower them with a voice, equipping them for life and learning and to understand that they should treat everyone with dignity as all people are made and loved by God.

This policy has been developed having regard to the Department for Education's statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. The school exercises professional judgement when determining curriculum content and delivery, ensuring it is age appropriate, developmentally suitable and reflective of the school's context.

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education- statutory guidance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between pupils)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools (highlighting the 9 Protected Characteristics)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC)

It is also aligned with the Church of England's *"A Charter for Faith-Sensitive and Inclusive Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education"*, and draws on guidance given in the Church of England '*Valuing All God's Children: Guidance for Church of England Schools on Challenging Homophobic, Biphobic and Transphobic Bullying'* (Church of England Education Office, second edition, updated Summer 2019) https://sex-matters.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/valuing-all-gods-children-july-2019_1.pdf

Our PSHE and RSE teaching has had due regard to the updated DfE Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance effective from September 2026. The guidance provides expanded expectations which inform curriculum design and delivery, while schools retain professional judgement over implementation in line with statutory requirements.

This places a stronger emphasis on **online safety and wellbeing**, **personal safety** and **accurate terminology for body parts**, including genitalia. Our school ensures that our pupils can critically engage with online content, recognise financial harms (e.g., gaming monetisation, scams, fraud), and understand their rights relating to privacy, consent and personal data.

The school teaches RSE in a way that is **factual, age appropriate and developmentally suitable**, using professional judgement to determine the appropriate depth and timing of content, in accordance with statutory guidance.

1.2 Equality

Teaching is grounded in factual information, biological knowledge where relevant, and safeguarding principles. **Sensitive or contested topics**, including matters relating to sex and gender, **are taught in a factual, age appropriate and balanced manner, in line with statutory guidance, safeguarding principles and the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.**

This policy will inform the school's Equalities Plan.

The DfE Guidance states, "Schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender), they should ensure this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum".

This can also have an impact on any anti-bullying policies in regard to these characteristics being the reason for the issue. The Church of England document "Valuing all God's Children", 2019, states:
"Schools should ensure that they have clear anti-bullying policies on preventing and tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic behaviour and language and that these policies are known and understood by all members of the school community. School leaders should present a clear message that HBT bullying will not be tolerated and that there can be no justification for this negative behaviour based on the Christian faith or the Bible. Schools should ensure that pupils understand how to report incidents. Pupils should be confident that if they report bullying it will be taken seriously."
It also asserts:
"Central to Christian theology is the truth that every single one of us is made in the image of God. Every one of us is loved unconditionally by God. We must avoid, at all costs, diminishing the dignity of any individual to a stereotype or a problem. Church of England schools offer a community where everyone is a person known and loved by God, supported to know their intrinsic value" (page 1)
"Opportunities to discuss issues to do with self-esteem, identity and bullying, including HBT (homophobic, biphobic and transphobic) bullying, should be included in physical, social, health and economic education or citizenship programmes. The curriculum should offer opportunities for pupils to

learn to value themselves and their bodies. Relationships and sex education should take LGBT people into account".

1.3 Statutory Relationships and Health Education

"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, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools except independent schools".

DfE Guidance

"Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way." "This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England…as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state funded schools."

"we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy."

"These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others' wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society."

"Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in the DfE guidance in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons."

This policy sets out statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education requirements.

The 2026 DfE RSE guidance sets out updated expectations within the existing statutory framework. Some content applies only where secondary age provision exists.

The school has had due regard to the updated DfE Relationships, Sex and Health Education statutory guidance effective from September 2026.

Where a school provides secondary education, pupils will be taught, at an age appropriate stage, in line with statutory guidance.

In primary settings, RSE provision is limited to statutory Relationships Education and Health Education and is delivered in a developmentally appropriate manner.

Some content within the statutory guidance applies only where secondary age provision exists.

1. Strengthened Online Safety and Digital Harms Requirements

• Online financial harms (gaming, scams, monetisation)
• Critical engagement with online content, including recognising misinformation, deepfakes, algorithms
• Privacy settings, consent and personal data
• Online grooming, coercion and harmful content
• Digital wellbeing: screen time, emotional impact, addictive design)

Where a school provides secondary education, pupils will be taught the following content at an age-appropriate stage and in accordance with statutory guidance:

• Toxic online influencers, incel culture, misogynistic content and harmful online subcultures
• Pornography, including its impact on expectations, consent, body image and relationships.

2. Personal Safety (Expanded Statutory Content)

• Personal safety around water, roads, railways and public spaces

Where a school provides secondary education, pupils will be taught the following content at an age-appropriate stage and in accordance with statutory guidance:

• Knife crime awareness, conflict resolution, and recognising coercion.

3. Bereavement, Change and Loss (New Statutory Content)

• Teaching about change and loss, including bereavement and emotional change
• Age appropriate language for discussing loss
• Links to safeguarding and pastoral support

4. Health Education (Expanded Requirements)

Where a school provides secondary education, pupils will be taught the following content at an age-appropriate stage and in accordance with statutory guidance:

• Mental health, with explicit reference to grief, loss, loneliness, and help-seeking.
• Menstrual and gynaecological health, including endometriosis, PCOS, and menopause.

5. Accurate/Appropriate Anatomical Terminology (Strengthened Requirement)

• Pupils are taught the appropriate anatomical names for body parts, including genitalia, at an age appropriate level and in line with statutory guidance, using professional judgement appropriate to pupils' age and maturity.

1.4 Implementation in school

The school maintains ongoing transparency with parents/carers by providing access to curriculum content, teaching materials and opportunities for discussion in line with statutory guidance.

In line with statutory guidance effective from September 2026, the school ensures **ongoing transparency with parents/carers**, including access to curriculum content and teaching materials and opportunities to discuss any concerns prior to delivery.

Our schemes of work have been carefully considered to ensure progression and a spiral curriculum. There is clear mapping of where statutory content is taught. Details of this school's curriculum content and delivery method can be seen in section 3 and on our school website https://www.stmatthiasceprimary.co.uk/our-learning/our-curriculum/pshe
Each school within The Spire Church of England Learning Trust has carefully constructed a PSHE and RSE curriculum which meets both the statutory Relationships and Health Education requirements in an age appropriate and factual way for the pupils at their educational setting. Regular reviews, monitoring and updates ensure that we use the most up to date teaching materials and that our teachers are well supported.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is part of a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. RSE is centred on personal safety, caring for others and building strong relationships. Parents/carers **cannot** withdraw from Relationships or Health Education, but can withdraw from sex education, except science (see Section 1.5).

Effective relationship and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. We aim to inform pupils, presenting relevant facts in an objective and balanced manner. The Spire Church of England Learning Trust will help young people learn to respect themselves and others, enabling them to move with confidence through childhood and the beginning stages of adolescence, empowering them with the knowledge and confidence to prepare them for their journey to adulthood. Teaching about puberty and reproduction is grounded in biological knowledge and delivered in an age appropriate, factual and safeguarding led manner, consistent with statutory guidance.

Intended outcomes for RSE at St Matthias C of E Primary School and adapted through The Spire Church of England Trust will enable:

- Opportunities to clarify some of their attitudes towards friendships, sexuality and gender. · Opportunities to discuss some moral issues – hearing the points of view of others and respecting other peoples' decisions, rights and bodies.
- A chance to explore ideas about family, parenting and the ways in which people care for each other.
- A safe environment for pupils to understand their bodies and bodily functions.
- Provide information which is realistic and relevant, and which reinforces positive social norms.
- The promotion of positive mental wellbeing and self perception.

RSE is embedded within our PSHE programme, and we select activities and resources which are **age, experience and culture appropriate**. Objective discussion of diversity in sexual orientation will be addressed to meet the needs of all pupils.

This is coupled with teaching pupils about the human body and its changes during puberty, including information about reproduction, control of fertility and sexual health, sexuality and sexual relationships.

Teaching will reflect the society that we now live in, including ensuring that RSE fosters gender equality and LGBT+ equality by teaching about LGBT+ people, relationships and families.

Parents/carers should also be aware that the Church of England states in "Valuing All God's Children", that Relationships and Sex education should: *"Make it clear that relationships and sex education is designed to prepare all pupils for the future, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. RSE must promote gender equality and LGBT+ equality and it must challenge discrimination. RSE must take the needs and experiences of LGBT+ people into account and it should seek to develop understanding that there are a variety of relationships and family patterns in the modern world."*

Our curriculum has been reviewed to ensure full alignment with the 2026 statutory requirements. This includes:

• Explicit teaching of appropriate anatomical terminology from KS1
• Clearer expectations about puberty and reproduction taught according to biological knowledge.
• Any reference to gender identity is approached factually, objectively and in an age-appropriate manner, in line with statutory guidance and the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010
• Ensuring parents/carers can view all RSE materials, including third party resources, as required by the 2026 guidance

Secondary aged pupils will also need to learn about:

• Consent, including digital consent, image-based abuse, and coercive control
• Healthy relationships, with a focus on communication, boundaries, and respect.
• Sexual health, including contraception, STIs, and accessing services.

1.5 Sex Education

The DfE Guidance recommends that all primary schools 'have a sex education programme tailored to the age and the physical and emotional maturity of the pupils.

However, 'Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools'.

Schools are to determine the content of sex education. Sex education 'should ensure that both boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence brings and – drawing on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science - how a baby is conceived and born'.

We feel that it is important that our pupils receive accurate information in a safe setting in which they can ask questions. This is delivered through specific lessons within our PSHE curriculum. These are highlighted in section 3 on our Curriculum Map.

The 2026 guidance reinforces that teaching in primary schools about puberty and reproduction is grounded in biological knowledge and delivered in an age appropriate, factual and safeguarding led manner, consistent with statutory guidance. Any additional content will also follow this guidance and clearly communicated to parents/carers.

1.6 Parent/Carers' right to request their child be excused from Sex Education

Parents/carers retain the right to request withdrawal from sex education, except where content forms part of the science curriculum. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

In **primary schools**, parents/carers **can withdraw** their child from any of the sex education delivered, **other than as part of the science curriculum**. There are clear processes for consultation and communication with parents/carers.

The Headteacher/Head of School or another member of school staff would discuss with parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was discussed in class, rather than what was directly discussed by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1. The Trust Board will approve the RSE policy and hold the Local Governing Body and Headteacher/Head of School to account for its implementation.

2.2 Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that:

- The implementation of the RSE policy is monitored and reviewed as part of the governing body's review of policies.
- Serious consideration will be given to any comments from parents/carers about the RSE curriculum and keep a record of all such comments.
- The content, delivery and all materials related to RSE are in accordance with the Trust's ethos and enable the Trust to fulfil its legal obligation.

2.3 Headteacher/Head of Schools

The Headteachers/Head of Schools will ensure that:

- All staff and parents/carers are informed of the policy and that the policy is implemented effectively.
- Members of staff are given sufficient training so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- The school is compliant with the Equality Act 2010, under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst protected characteristics.
- The teaching of LGBT+ is embedded within programmes of study and not delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson.
- The teaching of RSE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils.
- Liaison is made with all external agencies who work with pupils on the issues of RSE and ensure that they are aware of the school policy, and work within the framework.
- Clear information is available for parents/carers on the subject content.

- The school has reviewed and, where appropriate, updated its curriculum in line with the September 2026 DfE guidance including online safety, personal safety, bereavement, and accurate terminology.
- Teaching about puberty and reproduction is grounded in biological knowledge and delivered in an age appropriate, factual and safeguarding led manner, consistent with statutory guidance.
- Parents/carers can access all RSE materials in advance.
- Any reference to gender identity is factual, age-appropriate and not presented as ideology.

2.4 PSHE Lead

Each school in the Trust has its own PSHE Lead. The

PSHE Lead will be ensure that:

- All training required by teaching staff will be provided, either personally or through external agencies and advisors.
- The school has reviewed and, where appropriate, updated its curriculum in line with the September 2026 DfE guidance.
- The teaching of RSE is monitored to ensure that it is delivered according to the RSE curriculum and programme of study (implementation).
- The impact of the RSE curriculum enables all pupils to achieve expected outcomes.
- Liaison within The Spire Trust Learning Partnership will be undertaken to ensure best practice across the partnership.
- Monitor the new statutory content areas (online safety, personal safety, bereavement, appropriate anatomical terminology).
- Ensure staff receive CPD on delivering sensitive content confidently and safely.

2.4 Staff

All staff will ensure that:

- Ground rules are negotiated with the group before embarking on lessons of a sensitive nature, so that both the staff and pupils can work together in a supportive atmosphere in which all members can speak with confidence and without fear of embarrassment, anxiety or lack of respect.
- All pupils are offered the opportunity to explore ideas, situations and feelings in an atmosphere of confidence, trust and support.
- All pupils understand the importance of equality, trust and respect.
- Their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content.
- At all times, teaching will take place in the context of an explicit moral framework.
- All points of view they may express during the course of teaching RSE are unbiased and free from personal opinion.
- The teaching of RSE is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils.
- The emphasis of teaching RSE will always be the importance and understanding of personal relationships and the right of the individual to make informed choices.

- Issues of stereotyping, sexual equality, harassment, rights and legislation underpin the teaching of RSE.
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice and support from an appropriate agency or individual. It is inappropriate for staff to give pupils personal advice on matters of RSE.
- Where a pupil has made it known that they have embarked on a course of action likely to place them at risk, the member of staff will ensure that the pupil is aware of the implications of their behaviour/disclosure. The member of staff should refer any potential concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- A level of mutual respect is upheld with pupils in regard to the personal, private lives and opinions of staff.

2.6 Parents/Carers

The School acknowledges the key role that parents/carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents/carers are the first educators of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships. The 2026 guidance strengthens expectations around **parental transparency**. Our school ensures parents/carers can view all RSE materials, including any used by external visitors. We also demonstrate to parents/carers how we ensure age-appropriate delivery of sensitive content.

All parents/carers will be:

- Given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships and Sex Education.
- Able to discuss any concerns directly with the school.
- Encouraged to support the school in delivering this sensitive and statutory part of the curriculum and be open to discuss lesson content with their children.

3. Organisation of RSE within the PSHE Curriculum at St Matthias C of E Primary School

PSHE at our school is a planned programme of learning through which children and young people acquire the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to manage their lives. As part of a whole school approach, PSHE develops the qualities and attributes pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society.

Citizenship education is about enabling people to make their own decisions and to take responsibility for their own lives and their communities.

At St Matthias C of E Primary School, we use Jigsaw PSHE as our curriculum framework because it provides a comprehensive, carefully sequenced scheme of work that brings consistency and progression to children's learning across their primary years. Built on current research and best practice in child development, safeguarding and health education, it is kept continuously up to date with evolving statutory guidance and enables us to deliver high-quality PSHE education that meets our children's needs. The programme is distinctive in its approach including:

Emotional literacy at the core - Every Jigsaw lesson systematically develops children's emotional vocabulary and understanding. Children learn to recognise, name and talk about a wide range of

feelings in themselves and others. This emotional literacy supports children's ability to share and discuss things that are important in their lives, to seek help when needed, and to build positive relationships.

Mindful practice - Every Jigsaw lesson begins with 'Calm Me Time', a mindfulness activity designed to support self-regulation and create a safe, focused space for learning. This consistent practice forms part of our approach to children's emotional wellbeing and helps children to be ready for open, thoughtful discussion.

Connection and community - The 'Connect Us' activity in every lesson strengthens relationships within the class and develops children's social skills, building a sense of belonging and mutual respect that underpins all learning.

Developing skills for respectful dialogue - PSHE lessons provide regular opportunities for children to develop and practise essential communication skills including listening to others, expressing their own views clearly and respectfully, considering different perspectives, and engaging in constructive discussion. These oracy skills are fundamental to building positive relationships and respectful communities, enabling children to navigate differences with kindness and to participate confidently in democratic discussion.

Age-appropriate spiral curriculum - Topics are revisited across year groups with increasing depth and complexity, enabling children to build on prior learning in line with their developing maturity and understanding, with teachers able to adapt according to their pupils' needs.

Interactive, participative teaching - Lessons are designed to be engaging and active, using discussion, role-play, problem-solving and creative activities to develop skills alongside knowledge. Children don't just gain information - they explore topics in age-appropriate ways and develop practical skills that support them in their everyday lives.

The Six Jigsaw Puzzles

Our PSHE curriculum is organised into six themed units ('Puzzles'), each taught for approximately half a term:

Term	Puzzle	Key Content
Autumn 1	Being Me in My World	Understanding personal identity, my place in the class and school community, rights and responsibilities, democracy, making a positive contribution.
Autumn 2	Celebrating Difference	Recognising and respecting diversity, challenging stereotypes, understanding difference and similarity, addressing bullying, building empathy and compassion.
Spring 1	Dreams and Goals	Setting and working towards goals, understanding aspirations and future possibilities, developing perseverance and resilience, recognising achievements, working collaboratively.
Spring 2	Healthy Me	The relationship between physical and emotional health; nutrition, sleep, exercise and hygiene; emotional wellbeing; drug education (including medicines); keeping safe; understanding habits and making healthy lifestyle choices.

Term	Puzzle	Key Content
Summer 1	Relationships	Understanding different relationships and their characteristics, our families, managing friendship challenges, conflict resolution and communication skills, recognising when relationships are unhealthy, understanding loss and bereavement.
Summer 2	Changing Me	Understanding life cycles and human growth, coping positively with change, body image and self-esteem, puberty education, changing relationships, and for upper Key Stage 2, human reproduction (where taught as sex education).

Adapting Jigsaw for Our School Community
Whilst we follow the Jigsaw programme, we recognise that our children, families and context have specific needs and characteristics. Our PSHE lead and class teachers carefully consider each lesson's content and approach to ensure it is appropriate and relevant for our pupils, taking into account:

- The specific needs, experiences and developmental stages of pupils in each class
- Pupil voice - gathered through feedback within lessons, informal discussions with children, and pupil surveys.
- Local context and community considerations
- Feedback from parents, pupils and staff
- Our school's distinctive values and ethos

Where we make adaptations to the programme, these decisions are made thoughtfully, in consultation with senior leadership, and with reference to statutory requirements. Parents and carers are informed about significant adaptations, particularly where these relate to sensitive content.

The curriculum reflects statutory requirements for Relationships Education and Health Education and draws on national guidance to inform best practice.

The school regularly reviews its provision to ensure it remains accurate, age-appropriate and consistent with statutory expectations.

Details on what is currently covered can be found on our school website :
https://www.stmatthiasceprimary.co.uk/our-learning/our-curriculum/pshe

4. Safe and effective practice

What kind of language will be considered acceptable and appropriate for use in RSE lessons?

Pupils are taught the appropriate anatomical names for body parts, including genitalia, at an age-appropriate level and in line with statutory guidance, using professional judgement appropriate to pupils' age and maturity.

Staff will:

- Use the correct terms for all body parts
- Use clear, unequivocal language in an objective manner
- Discuss what 'slang' words mean and say that some could be offensive
- Use their judgement in discussion depending on understanding and maturity level of learners.

Using the correct terminology will make it clear that everybody uses common words and avoids prejudiced or offensive language. Teachers are guided and supported with the appropriate terminology by the school scheme. Lessons contain a variety of teaching methods and strategies that encourage interaction, involvement and questioning: working individually, in pairs and groups; discussions; role play; prioritising; quizzes; research; case studies; games; circle time and visiting speakers. Teachers use professional judgement to ensure language does not normalise harmful behaviour or reinforce stereotypes, in line with statutory guidance.

Boundaries for discussion and confidentiality are discussed before the lessons begin. Each class/group establishes ground rules, explaining how they would like everyone to behave in order to learn. Distancing techniques (e.g. the friend, role play, worry box or 'ask-it basket') are used when teaching sensitive issues.

Inclusion

The RSE curriculum is inclusive and reflects the diversity of family life and relationships in modern Britain. Content is delivered in a way that is appropriate to pupils' age, maturity and context, and which ensures all pupils are treated with dignity and respect in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the school's ethos.

Things that will be considered:

- The need to approach RSE sensitively, as pupils are all different, with different types of family.
- That staff encourage boys and girls to explore topics from different gender viewpoints and never assume that intimate relationships are between opposite sexes.
- RSE teaching is inclusive and ensures all pupils are treated with dignity and respect, in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the school's ethos.
- That links between RSE and the school's inclusion policy are made.

5. Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

We recognise that at the heart of RSE, the focus is on keeping children safe and acknowledge the significant role schools have in preventative education. We will allow children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports, as can effective RSE, which brings about an understanding of what is and is not appropriate in a relationship.

We recognise that there is an increased likelihood of safeguarding disclosures following RSE lessons. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

In line with the document 'Keeping Children Safe in Education,' all staff are aware of what to do if a child reports a concern and will follow the school's safeguarding procedures immediately. Staff are also aware of the need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved.

The school is aware that working with external agencies and partners will enhance the delivery of RSE and will support the school to bring in specialist knowledge and implement different ways of engaging with young people. The school will check the credentials of all visiting organisations and any visitors linked with the agency. The school will also ensure that the teaching delivered by the visitor meets the planned programme and the published school policy. The school will work with agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age appropriate and accessible to all pupils. Any material to be used as part of the delivery will be approved by the school in advance of the session. The school will also ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

The strengthened online safety content in the 2026 guidance reflects the increasing prevalence of online abuse, grooming, financial exploitation and harmful content. Schools must ensure pupils understand how to recognise risk, seek help and report concerns. Online abuse, grooming and financial exploitation are recognised nationally as growing safeguarding risks, and the school has reflected this within its curriculum design.

Pupils are taught the appropriate anatomical names for body parts, including genitalia, at an age-appropriate level and in line with statutory guidance, using professional judgement appropriate to pupils' age and maturity.

Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children

Section 175/157 of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on schools to make arrangements for its pupils and states that:

"proprietors/governors of independent schools (which include Academies and Free schools) must make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school."

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2018) requires all schools to follow the procedure for protecting children from abuse. This Policy is written with reference to Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, September 2025) which defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

• protecting children from maltreatment;

• preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development;

• ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and

• taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes

Safeguarding children is consequently more than contributing to the protection of individual children and the school is committed to the development of policy and practice that supports children, and their families to be safe, be healthy, enjoy and achieve, contribute positively and achieve economic wellbeing.

The Spire Trust and our school strives to promote the welfare of our pupils by:

1. Creating and maintaining a safe learning environment

2. Identifying child welfare concerns and taking appropriate action

3. Using the curriculum to enable our children to develop keep safe strategies

4. Operating safe recruitment and selection procedures to prevent unsuitable people working with our children.

The school policies are designed to meet these needs and are available on request or via the school website. This policy applies mostly to points 1 and 3 above and reflects current legislation, accepted best practice and complies with government guidance.

At St Matthias C of E Primary School, we recognise the importance of promoting healthy friendships and relationships through the whole school Christian ethos, child protection, anti-bullying work and the RSE Policy. Positive relationships and being given the knowledge that they will need will encourage children to disclose any worries about their own safety or the safety of another pupil. Key messages

about healthy relationships are taught to all pupils using age and stage appropriate language to explore topics such as friendships, appropriate touch, keeping safe, recognising and assessing risk and knowing how and where to get help when needed.

6. Engaging Stakeholders

Parents/carers will be informed about the policy through written communication or email home
.
The policy will be available to parents/carers through the school website. The school works in partnership with parents/carers, providing information, access to materials and opportunities for discussion in line with statutory guidance. Any comments subsequently made by parents/carers will be considered when the policy is reviewed.

Our school can demonstrate how they ensure age-appropriate delivery of sensitive content and provide parents/carers with access to all RSE materials, including external resources.

Parents/carers **do** have a legal right to withdraw their children from dedicated 'sex education' lessons. They **do not** have a right to withdraw their children from certain aspects of Relationships and Health education.

We will work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have. If any parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision.

The Trust Board will be informed of the RSE policy and curriculum through governor and /or trust board meetings.

Pupil voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of pupils.

7. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

The delivery and impact of PSHE and RSE are monitored through the school's monitoring cycle.

Monitoring ensures content is **accurate, age appropriate and consistent with statutory guidance**, and that safeguarding procedures are effective.

Outcomes from monitoring inform curriculum review, staff training and policy updates.

Children and young people will be given regular opportunities to reflect on and identify what they have learned and what they need to learn next. Teachers also need to gauge pupils' progress and make informed improvements to their learning if required.

RSE and PSHE education cannot be assessed in the same way as most other subjects. It would be inappropriate for assessments of holistic education to imply passing or failing for instance, as this might imply passing or failing 'as a person', given the subject's personal nature. It is, however, possible to recognise and evidence progress and attainment in gained knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes