HEREWARD HOUSE SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

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Hereward House School: RSHE Policy

Our School's Aims

At Hereward House we aim to provide a warm, welcoming and safe atmosphere in which every child can thrive and feel comfortable. Whilst embracing the highest academic aspirations for our pupils, we strive to create a stimulating, purposeful and happy community, where every child feels valued and secure. Promoting the well-being of all pupils is at the heart of what we aim to do. For us the most important outcome is for all pupils to be kind, considerate and confident whilst looking out for every member of the school community. We aim to be a school where pupils will be encouraged and assisted to develop academically, morally, emotionally and culturally. It is our belief each pupil should enjoy their school days and reflect upon them with pride, pleasure and affection. We are preparing pupils not just for senior school, but for life.

Introductory statement:

This policy covers Hereward Houses' whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Policy (RSHE).

RSHE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

Hereward House believes that all children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and needs-led RSHE. We believe that through providing high quality RSHE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.

This policy was produced in consultation with our staff, board of governors, pupils and parents. We will ensure the policy is effectively communicated to staff and parents, including through publishing the policy on our school website.

The information below complies with our statutory obligations to deliver RSHE under sections 34 & 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. It will have due regard for the DfE's statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Guidance and other relevant guidance.

This policy has been updated in line with the DfE Relationships, Sex and Health Education Guidance (2025), which becomes mandatory from September 2026. The school recognises the importance of equipping pupils with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate contemporary issues including artificial intelligence (AI), online harms, image-based abuse, misinformation, financial exploitation and emerging safeguarding risks.

We will review the policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSHE programme

continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

This policy should be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- PSHE Policy
- Behaviour, Rewards and Consequences Policy
- Online Safety and Cyberbullying Policy
- SEND and Learning Support Policy
- Science Curriculum Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy

This policy is written with reference to the *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSiE) 2026*.

1. Equality, inclusion and social justice:

> Schools should consider what they can do to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole-school approach. (RSHE Guidance, p14)

We believe that RSHE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSHE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and sexism and sexual harassment in schools. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSHE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBTQ+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2014 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we take into account the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSHE.

An inclusive RSHE at Hereward House will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010.

Hereward House recognises the importance of teaching pupils about equality, respect and protected characteristics in an age-appropriate manner. Through RSHE, pupils will learn to challenge prejudice, discrimination, misogyny, gender-based harassment and harmful stereotypes. Lessons will promote respect for all individuals and foster a culture of dignity, kindness and inclusion.

RSHE contributes to the school's wider work under the **Prevent Duty**, by encouraging critical thinking, respectful dialogue, and resilience to radicalisation.

2. Definition of Relationships and Sex Education:

> Give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. (RSHE Guidance, p25)

We define Relationships Education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. We define Sex Education as learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human sexuality and behaviour, including human reproduction. This includes conception and contraception, safer sex, sexually transmitted infections and sexual health.[1]

We take the approach that Relationships and Sex Education are best approached in an integrated way and using a gender equity and human rights framework. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content. Simultaneously, we will seek to nurture children's curiosity about the world around them, supporting their development and their respect for themselves and each other.[2]

To cover the curriculum content outlined in the RSHE Guidance, we will equip our pupils to build positive and respectful relationships online and offline. The programme will also help pupils develop the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate online information, identify misinformation and manipulated content, understand the influence of social media and emerging technologies, and make informed decisions about their physical, emotional and digital wellbeing.

We seek to ensure that it gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to:

- realise their health (including sexual health), wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- explore and value their personal and sexual identity and the personal/sexual identities of others
- understand family structures, committed relationships and the legal status of different types of long-term relationships
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them

[1] The definition for Relationships Education and Sex Education are model definitions created by the Sex Education Forum.
[2] This text is taken from the Sex Education Forum

- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.

We believe that high quality, comprehensive RSHE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Evidence shows that effective RSHE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

The RSHE programme ensures that pupils with SEND are fully supported through differentiated planning and targeted support, in line with the **SEND and Learning Support Policy**.

3. Subject content:

The curriculum programme is developed by the lead teacher, in conjunction with the views of teachers, pupils and parents. At Hereward House we will meet the learning objectives and content outlined in the Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education and Health Education Guidance. All content will be delivered in a timely way and will be age and developmentally appropriate to meet the needs of our pupils, including those pupils with SEND.

RSHE is taught through a highly structured scheme of work published by Discovery Education. It a digital programme that covers the complete set of Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education objectives for pupils in Form 1-6. CE2 and CE1 will also follow a digital programme published by Jigsaw. Written by subject-expert teachers; including a PSHE expert, curriculum advisor, classroom teacher and government policy advisor – to ensure we have the materials to deliver the curriculum requirements in a sensitive and age-appropriate way.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe.

Upper School (CE2 and CE1):

• Physical and emotional development of boys and girls and when this is likely to happen.

• Puberty and its effects on the brain, mind and body (relevant Biology lessons are taught around the same time and have been prepared by/with the PSHEE coordinator to ensure a complementary and thorough approach)
• Basic relevant anatomy and how a baby is conceived and born (mostly taught in Biology)
• Self-esteem, a healthy body image, and respect for oneself and for the wishes of others
• Healthy friendships and relationships as well as the responsibilities of parenthood
• Sexuality and sexual orientation, LGBTQ+ history and homophobia
• Digital and on-line safety issues (including an online ChildNet presentation), including the risk of exploitation
Artificial Intelligence (AI), including awareness of AI-generated content, deepfakes and manipulated media.
• Online scams, fraud, financial exploitation and coercion.
• Image-based abuse, sextortion and the risks associated with sharing digital images.
• Critical evaluation of online information, social media influence and online misinformation.
• Healthy online and offline relationships, including understanding the impact of online behaviours.
• The harmful effects of pornography and unrealistic representations of relationships.
• Understanding and challenging misogyny, harmful online influencers and extremist online communities.
• Positive masculinity, respectful behaviour and bystander responsibility.
• Bereavement, grief and emotional resilience.
• Menstrual health, reproductive health and accessing appropriate health services.
• Personal safety including awareness of road, rail, water and fire safety risks.
• Understanding how and where to seek help, advice and support relating to physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.

4. Subject delivery:

> 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 or lessons. (RSHE Guidance, p8)

RSHE will be delivered as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach. The lead teacher will work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas (science, computing, PE and citizenship) to ensure a holistic and joined up approach to what is taught in RSHE. We also supplement learning through using a whole school approach and utilising time outside of the classroom, such as school assemblies, art and drama, school celebrations and events.

RSHE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We will take care to highlight lessons that contain what we define as sex education so that we can respect the wishes of parents who have withdrawn their children from this content.

We also use external agencies where appropriate to deliver aspects of Relationships and Sex Education.

The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (for example when teaching about external body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when teaching RSHE. All staff who have responsibility for delivering RSHE will undergo training to ensure they are up-to-date with the RSHE policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSHE. In addition to ongoing training, CPD will also be scheduled in response to updates to our RSHE scheme of work and any new development in terms of RSHE content.

Teaching will be delivered using evidence-informed approaches and in a manner that promotes a safe, respectful and supportive learning environment. Staff will encourage discussion and critical thinking whilst ensuring that lessons remain factual, balanced and age-appropriate.
Staff will receive ongoing professional development relating to new safeguarding risks, online harms, AI technology, image-based abuse and other emerging issues identified through statutory guidance or safeguarding updates.

5. Monitoring:

We regularly monitor our RSHE scheme of work to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistent, that the curriculum is meeting the new national requirements under the Relationships Education, RSHE and Health Education guidance, and that learning outcomes are reflective of pupil need.

This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team in conjunction with lead teacher and Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, members of staff, parents/carers and pupils will be consulted and any subsequent changes made clearly communicated.

Monitoring will include periodic review of curriculum coverage against statutory RSHE requirements and emerging safeguarding priorities to ensure that teaching remains current and responsive to pupils' needs.

The school will take account of pupil feedback when reviewing RSHE provision to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant to the lived experiences, concerns and safeguarding needs of pupils.

The School's Leadership Team monitors the implementation of the programme through:

- Planning scrutiny
- Learning walks
- Looking at samples of pupils' work
- Pupil voice surveys.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

6. Evaluation:

Evaluation of our programme is crucial to ensure that we can continue to improve on provision and teaching effectiveness. The evaluation process involves structured and informal pupil and staff feedback including:

- Teacher evaluation of lessons and the overall RSHE programme
- Evidence from lesson observations
- Feedback and evaluation by pupils (for example, using pupil interviews, questionnaires/ surveys, focus groups or using pupil question boxes.)
- Scrutiny of pupil assessment records
- Sampling pupil work and portfolios.

7. Pupil assessment:

> Schools should have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in these subjects as for other curriculum areas. (RSHE Guidance, p43)

Hereward House uses a range of assessment methods to get regular feedback on pupil progress in RSHE. We also use pupil assessment to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. Lessons are planned to ensure that pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged.

Assessment methods used include:

- Project work
- Written assignments
- Students' pre and post unit self-evaluation
- Reflective pupil workbooks.

8. Pupil voice:

> Listening and responding to the views of young people will strengthen the policy, ensuring that it meets the needs of all pupils. (RSHE Guidance, p12)

Pupil voice is central to the culture and ethos of Hereward House. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSHE is to children's lives. Throughout our RSHE scheme of work we embed pupil voice practices to enable students to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSHE covers and to ensure that they listen to other opinions and evidence, reflect on their own perspectives and take a broader view. We want to ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive or

exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed. We want to ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion and diversity are promoted.

9. Answering pupil questions:

> The school's policy should cover how the school handles [difficult] questions. Given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. (RSHE Guidance, p23)

RSHE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others. As much as possible, where a question is relevant to the whole class, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. Questions will always be answered in an age and developmentally appropriate way and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their students that could make either party vulnerable.

We believe that an open approach to answering questions prevents pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information online or from peers and older students. We believe exploring issues with the whole class helps to reduce the stigma and shame that can surround some of the issues explored in RSHE. Importantly, we believe that children are better protected from harm and abuse when they are able to discuss issues openly with trained professionals and in a safe environment.

Questions relating to online harms, artificial intelligence, image-sharing, pornography, misinformation or safeguarding concerns will be handled sensitively and in accordance with safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, pupils will be signposted towards reliable sources of information and support.

10. Working with parents/carers:

> All schools should work closely with parents when planning and delivering these subjects. Schools should ensure that parents know what will be taught and when. (RSHE Guidance, p17) All schools must have in place a written policy for […] RSHE. Schools must consult parents in developing and reviewing their policy. (RSHE Guidance, p11)

We believe that the successful teaching of RSHE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/ carers can play an important role in the RSHE of their children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school. Our RSHE policy has been developed through consulting parents and carers.

In line with statutory guidance, the school will actively consult parents when reviewing this policy and will provide opportunities for parents to understand the content and aims of the RSHE curriculum.

We work with parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of what we teach and when through the following methods:

- Parents' evenings
- Sharing copies of the policy in face-to-face meetings and/ or through emails
- Letters to parents/carers giving information about when RSHE will be delivered and when certain classes
- Parent's Association.

The school website will contain the most recent version of this policy and parents may request further information about curriculum content at any time.

We may share examples of some of the key resources we use with parents/carers to reassure them of the content and to enable them to continue the conversations started in class at home.

11. Parental right to request their child be excused from sex education:[3]

> All schools should work closely with parents […] and clearly communicate the fact that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. (RSHE Guidance, p17)

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSHE.

Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSHE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

[3] This section reflects current statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education. The school will ensure that parents are informed of their rights and responsibilities through ongoing communication and consultation.

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the headteacher to discuss their concerns. The headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum.

If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the headteacher in writing and the school will keep a record of this. Except in exceptional circumstances, we will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child. We will remind parents annually that the request to withdraw is still in place and invite them to confirm whether they still want it.

The information above is based on the Relationships, RSHE and Health Education guidance that becomes statutory from September 2020. Up until September 2020, the parental right to withdraw remains the same under existing legislation and Sex and Relationships Education Guidance (2000). This means that parents will have a right to withdraw from some or all of sex education lessons in primary schools. For secondary schools, a parent can withdraw their child from some or all of sex education. A head teacher cannot overrule a request for withdrawal. This includes children above the age of 16. For more information please see: gov.uk/ government/publications/sex-and-relationship-education

12. Working with visitors and external agencies:

> Working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people […] It is important to agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with school policy. (RSHE Guidance, p18)

From time-to-time Hereward House may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSHE scheme of work. External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSHE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school.

A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons so as to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have.

External providers will be carefully quality assured to ensure that any resources, teaching materials and delivery methods are accurate, age-appropriate, inclusive and consistent with statutory guidance and safeguarding expectations.

Any external visitor will be expected to comply with this policy and other related policies, including the school's confidentiality and child protection policy.

We will also ensure that:

- There is appropriate planning, preparatory and follow up work for the session.
- The visitor understands the cohort of children involved, including the different ability levels and diversities in identities across protected characteristics. They will also be made aware of any specific issues relating to child protection.

13. Safeguarding and child protection:

> At the heart of these subjects there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education [...] Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. (RSHE Guidance, p42)

Hereward House acknowledges that RSHE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in *Keeping Children Safe in Education.*

RSHE helps children to understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships and to understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse, or have experienced, abuse.

RSHE also supports pupils to recognise online abuse, coercive control, image-based abuse, sexual harassment, sexual violence, exploitation, grooming, radicalisation, misogynistic behaviour and other forms of harm that may occur both online and offline.

We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSHE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences. In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures.

We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSHE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

Particular attention will be given to emerging safeguarding risks, including online exploitation, AI-generated content, deepfakes, sextortion, online fraud and harmful online communities or influencers.

While Hereward House wants to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy. We do this by using a number of teaching techniques including the use of a working agreement, where rights

respecting ground rules are created with pupils on what makes a safe and welcoming environment for all.

Once ground rules have been set, we will check they are in place throughout the scheme of work and actively referred to. Through the use of ground rules and other approaches, such as distancing techniques, we believe the school can create a supportive environment for discussions that can be sensitive or difficult.

All RSHE-related safeguarding concerns are managed in accordance with the school's **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**.

14. Statement by the Governing Body:

In adopting this policy, the Governing Body recognises its responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively, including that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way the ensures that the school fulfils its legal obligations.