



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Priority 1	Priority 2	Priority 3
‘No Child left behind’	Consistency in achieving excellence	Personal growth and positive futures

Background

This policy is based on the new DFE statutory guidance June 2019 and has been implemented in September 2021 after a consultation process involving all stakeholders. It is reviewed on a yearly basis and will need further amendments in 2026 due to new government guidance coming into effect.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Children and Social Work Act 2017 section 34, Education Act 2002 sections 79 and 80 and the Education Act 1996 sections 404 to 407.

Relevant regulations are The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.

The DFE guidance document Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2019 is essential reading and the DFE document 'Keeping children safe in education' September 2025 is helpful.

Introduction

Today's children and young people grow up in an increasingly complex world both online and offline. This presents many opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In today's environment they must learn to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way both online and offline.

It is the intention of Chadwell Heath Academy to teach age appropriate, pupil sensitive, evidence based RSHE, that respects the law and all communities in Redbridge.

At Chadwell Heath Academy we recognise that RSHE is learning about physical, moral and emotional development, not just about intimate relationships. It is about the importance of stable and loving relationships, including marriage for family life, and about respect, love and care. RSE provides pupils with factual knowledge and an understanding of the influences on young people, encouraging them to be aware of the options open to them and to take charge of decisions about their own behaviour, including online behaviour. It encourages the development of personal and interpersonal skills, the awareness and respect of self and others and encourages reflection and responsibility.

From the academic year 2020/21, under 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:

- It is compulsory for all secondary schools to provide **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)**.
- It is compulsory for all schools, including academies and free schools, but not independent schools, to provide **Health Education**. However, personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools.

Parents of pupils at Chadwell Heath Academy may request to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE, but only after discussion with the Head of Year. The school will respect the parents' wishes if they continue to hold that view after discussion. However, parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction necessary under national curriculum science. After turning 15 years of age, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education then the school will make arrangements to provide it within the next three terms and the parents have no right to appeal against that decision.

This policy is available on the school's website and was developed in consultation with parents and governors and, while the school chooses how to deliver the subject, the guidance offered by the Department for Education (DFE) has been considered in order to fulfil the statutory requirements accordingly.

When finalised, the policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the school. RSHE is carried out principally within the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme and is taught by form tutors during the allocated PSHE time in the morning.

When planning the teaching of RSHE the school considered the religious and cultural backgrounds of all pupils and reflects what the law allows and does not allow.

The school is mindful to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage or vulnerability of any of our pupils under the SEND code of practice when planning RSE lessons. Also, teachers try hard not to discriminate against any pupils because of any 'protected characteristics' under the Equality Act 2010 (ie age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity or sexual orientation).

A. Objectives and Targets

The objective of RSHE at Chadwell Heath Academy is to develop further the relationships education our pupils have received in primary school and give them the information they need to help them to develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, including what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage, partnership or other type of committed relationship.

The school is also committed to delivering a comprehensive health education programme that focusses on: Mental wellbeing, Internet safety and harms, Physical health and fitness, Healthy eating, Drugs, alcohol and tobacco, Health and prevention, Basic first aid and Changing adolescent body.

Since September 2021, it has been the legal requirement of Secondary Schools – both maintained and Academies to teach Relationships, Sex and Health Education, alongside the Science National Curriculum and within the context of safeguarding and maintaining a child centred approach in accordance with the 'Keeping children safe in education document' (DfE, Sept, 2025).

Equality

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equalities Duty (2014): schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils or allow young people to be bullied because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (Protected Characteristics)

The delivery of the content of RSHE will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND.

At Chadwell Heath Academy we celebrate difference and diversity. The bullying or discrimination of anyone for any reason is not acceptable. It is expected that our Relationships Education curriculum will lead to a stronger sense of community, mutual respect and give pupils a sense of responsibility. This will help, to keep a safe, inclusive and caring place for all, upholding the core values and ethos of the school.

Safeguarding

Safeguarding is an important aspect of all the lessons taught as part of RSHE in our school. Safeguarding is more than simply keeping pupils safe in school. We leave them vulnerable if we do not do everything, we can to equip them to keep themselves safe in school, outside school and in the future. The safeguarding content in RSHE is therefore to teach students an understanding of the law relating to sexual consent, exploitation, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence, FGM and how these can affect current and future relationships. Our safeguarding policy will be applied to and supported by all aspects of RSHE and any disclosures or issues arising as part of RSHE, will be dealt with in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

B. Statutory Aspects of RSHE to be covered

RSHE at Chadwell Heath Academy builds on the foundations of relationships and health education our pupils will have received at their primary schools and on the age-appropriate sex education that they may have already received. In addition to that, the content covered in other national curriculum subjects has been considered in order to avoid duplication.

The Key stage 3 and Key stage 4 National Curriculum for science states that young people's learning should include a recap about menstruation and puberty, teaching about human reproduction and birth, includes drugs education and the study of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.

There continues to be no right to withdraw from the Science National Curriculum.

Teaching will explain relevant legal provisions as topics are covered so that pupils clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make. As stated above, there is also an emphasis on matters relating to safeguarding in order to equip them to keep themselves safe in school, outside school and in the future.

For a detailed breakdown of topics and lesson content a separate document outlining the scheme of work will be available on the website. This will also clearly indicate lessons that are deemed as sex education content, where the right to withdraw applies.

C. Definition of Topics

The content that define each topic area is outlined below and follows the statutory guidance. Relationships and Health Education are compulsory elements of the curriculum. There is consequently no option to withdraw from its teaching. Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from the Sex Education aspect of the course, in part or in full, if this is what they would prefer after discussing this with the school. Withdrawal Procedures are explained in Section F. Where a lesson incorporates both topic areas, it will be classified by its primary focus: Relationships Education or Sex Education. Based upon this classification, it may or may not be compulsory for children to attend.

Relationships Education and Staying Safe

1) Families

Pupils should know:

- i) that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- ii) how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- iii) what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- iv) why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- v) the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- vi) the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- vii) how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

2) Respectful Relationships, including Friendships

Pupils should know

- i) the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- ii) practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.

- iii) how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- iv) that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- v) about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- vi) that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- vii) what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- viii) the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and Media

Pupils should know

- i) their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- ii) about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- iii) not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
- iv) what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- v) the impact of viewing harmful content.
- vi) that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- vii) that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- viii) how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being Safe

Pupils should know:

- i) the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- ii) how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).

Sexual Education

Intimate and Sexual Relationships, Sexual Health

- i) how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- ii) that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- iii) the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
- iv) that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- v) that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- vi) the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- vii) the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- viii) that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- ix) how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- x) about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- xi) how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- xii) how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing

6) Mental Wellbeing

Pupils should know

- i) how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- ii) that happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- iii) how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- iv) common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
- v) how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- vi) the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.

7) Internet Safety and Harms

Pupils should know

- i) the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- ii) how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

8) Physical Health and Fitness

Pupils should know

- i) the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- ii) the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardio-vascular ill-health.
- iii) about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

9) Healthy Eating

Pupils should know

- i) how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

10) Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

Pupils should know

- i) the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
- ii) the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- iii) the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
- iv) the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- v) awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- vi) the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.

11) Health and Prevention

Pupils should know

- i) about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- ii) about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- iii) (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
- iv) the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- v) the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

12) Basic First Aid

Pupils should know

- i) basic treatment for common injuries.
- ii) life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- iii) the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

13) Changing Adolescent Body

Pupils should know

- i) key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- ii) the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

D. Responsibilities

1) Governors

The governing body will ensure that:

This statutory policy is available on the school's website.

- Information is provided for parents on the subject content and what rights they may have to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education lessons.
- RSE as taught at Chadwell Heath Academy fulfils its legal obligations and timetabled commitments.
- RSE is adequately resourced, well led and effectively managed, providing well planned lessons from teachers who keep up-to-date with pedagogy and technology to support the subject.

- RSE is delivered in a way to be accessible for all pupils with SEND so that all pupils can make progress in achieving expected educational outcomes.
- RSE is delivered by teachers and others with an awareness of the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

2) Lead RSHE teacher

The lead RSHE teacher will:

- Ensure a smooth transition between primary and secondary school by checking with pupils their knowledge gained in relationships education at primary school.
- Be aware of the Equality Act 2010, and be mindful not to discriminate against any pupils because of any 'protected characteristics' (age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation) when planning for RSHE.
- Be aware of and make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage or vulnerability under the SEND code of practice when planning for RSHE.
- Set out and monitor the subject content, ensuring that it is always age-appropriate and evidence based RSHE that respects the law and follows the statutory guidance.
- Ensure that RSHE will link with, but not duplicate, other aspects of the PSHE curriculum eg drug education and student substance abuse, or areas of the wider curriculum, eg Science, ICT and Religious Education.
- Ensure it will be set in the context of the school's general ethos (social, moral, spiritual and cultural) and promote the well-being of the pupils in general.
- Advise on how RSHE is taught, eg lesson planning for differentiation, and who is responsible for teaching it.
- Provide guidance on assessment of young people's learning and progress.
- Be aware of how any safeguarding issue in the context of RSHE will be dealt with at the school.
- Monitor and evaluate the provision through lesson observations, surveys and focus groups

When using external agencies:

Chadwell Heath Academy occasionally uses external visitors to deliver certain topics within RSHE because they can enhance delivery of the subject and bring specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people. The school checks in advance:

- That the teaching delivered by visitors fits with the planned programme for teaching RSHE.
- The details of what will be covered by the visitor, the materials that the visitor will use in the sessions, a session plan, and how the session will be delivered to ensure age appropriateness for our pupils and inclusivity.
- They are fully aware of the relevant provisions of The Equality Act 2010.
- That the lead teacher will also discuss with the visitor aspects of confidentiality and reporting any safeguarding issues.

3) Parental Involvement and Rights

- Parents are made aware of what will be taught and when through the website. Opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach help increase confidence in the curriculum. The school therefore seeks an open dialogue with parents and to address any concerns and help support parents in managing conversations with their children on these issues. The relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 will be explained to parents. A sample of resources and lesson plans will be available for parents to view. If a parent would like to see additional material it will be made available to them on request.
- Parents of pupils at Chadwell Heath Academy may request to withdraw their children from all or part of any sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE, but only after discussion with the Head of Year. Further details of the withdrawal procedures are outlined in Section F.

E. Special Considerations

1) Arrangements for students with SEND needs, Looked After Children, children on the CP register and others with potential vulnerabilities.

It may be the case that some aspects of the RSHE syllabus may not be appropriate to some pupils due to personal circumstance. It is the responsibility of the school to attempt to identify these issues and to mitigate against them (see responsibilities for this below). This may include the development of differentiated material and / or the withdrawal of pupils from some aspects of the course. Wherever possible parents will be involved in this process, however, it is recognised that this may not be appropriate in all cases.

It is also recognised that this may be a difficult process and that issues that are not foreseen will present themselves during the course. When this occurs adjustments will be made as necessary.

At all times the welfare of the pupils is paramount.

2) Responsibilities

The following managers will need to ensure that they consult the syllabus and lesson plans in conjunction with the Lead RSHE teacher.

- a) The SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Lead will receive a summary of the scheme of work (provided by the Lead Teacher RSHE) and have access to all lesson resources.
- b) The SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Lead will scrutinise the learning content in order to decide if specific action is needed with regards to individual students. When making these decisions they will consider the learning needs of these students as well as their personal circumstances.
- c) The decisions taken by the SENCO and/or Safeguarding Lead should be made in full consultation with the Head of Year and Lead teacher RSHE. Parents should be included unless there is good reason not to. Decisions should be recorded on appropriate files.
- d) If students with potential vulnerabilities are removed from lessons, they will either:
 - receive differentiated lessons provided by the Inclusion Department, or in exceptional circumstances
 - work on alternative purposeful learning content.

The Head of Year will have overview of these arrangements.

- e) Teachers delivering RSHE are, as part of their training, made aware of the necessity to differentiate learning content for their classes. The Lead Teacher RSE will provide this training.

F. Withdrawal Procedures

In accordance with the DfE statutory guidance, parents have the right to withdraw their child from some or all Sex Education lessons (but not Relationships or Health Education). The school has therefore identified all Sex Education sections by evaluating each lesson individually.

These lessons are clearly labelled and this information is available to all parents through the website.

Process:

- All parents will receive an information letter about the RSHE programme and will be reminded of the information published on the website, which includes the scheme of work, the policy and sample lessons. Resources for all lessons may be viewed with the Head of Year on request.
- If a parent wants to withdraw their child from the sex education lesson, they must contact the Head of Year, who will then discuss the request with the parent as stated in the statutory guidance.
- In these meetings the Head of Year will discuss 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 said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher
- The Head of Year will document this process accordingly.
- If a student is excused from Sex Education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during this time. The Head of Year will be responsible for these arrangements.
- The school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Reviewing

The governors will review this policy annually and assess its implementation and effectiveness in the light of any changes to the national curriculum or to legislation. The views of staff, parents and children are taken into account whenever changes are introduced.