



ST JOHN'S SCHOOL
SIDMOUTH, UNITED KINGDOM

PSHE, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Policy

Policy owner: Head of School

Approved by: Directors

Applies to: Whole school, including EYFS, Junior School, Senior School, boarding, day pupils, full boarders, flexi boarders and school activities

Reviewed: September 2026

Next review due: September 2027

For regulatory purposes, references to Directors include the proprietor body where applicable.

Purpose

St John's School is committed to providing a broad, balanced and age-appropriate personal development curriculum that supports pupils' spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

This policy sets out the school's approach to PSHE, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

The school recognises that PSHE and RSHE are central to safeguarding, wellbeing, respectful relationships, personal safety, health, citizenship, online safety, equality, inclusion and preparation for adult life.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, Online Safety Policy, Behaviour Management Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Equal Opportunities and Anti-Discrimination Policy, SEND Policy, EAL Policy, Curriculum Policy, Careers Guidance Policy, Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, Preventing Extremism and Radicalisation Policy, Boarding policies, EYFS Policy, Data Protection Policy and Records Retention Schedule.

Legal and guidance framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to:

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education Regulations 2019
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND Code of Practice, where applicable or appropriate
- Prevent duty guidance
- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- DfE guidance on political impartiality, where applicable or appropriate
- UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018

This policy reflects the revised statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education which applies from 1 September 2026.

Aims

Through PSHE, Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education, the school aims to help pupils:

- Develop self-awareness, confidence, empathy and resilience
- Understand healthy, respectful relationships
- Recognise unsafe, unhealthy or abusive relationships
- Understand consent, boundaries, privacy and personal safety
- Make informed, safe and responsible choices on and offline
- Understand physical health, mental wellbeing and healthy lifestyles
- Develop emotional literacy and self-regulation
- Understand puberty, growing up and body changes in an age-appropriate way
- Understand sexual health and intimate relationships at the appropriate stage
- Recognise risks linked to online behaviour, image sharing, pornography, AI misuse and harmful content
- Understand equality, diversity, respect and fundamental British values
- Challenge prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harmful stereotypes
- Understand financial literacy, economic wellbeing and preparation for the workplace
- Know how and where to seek help

Whole-school approach

The school delivers PSHE and RSHE through a planned, progressive and age-appropriate curriculum from EYFS to Year 11.

The curriculum is supported by assemblies, tutor time, pastoral care, boarding life, pupil voice, visiting speakers, themed events, online safety education, careers education and cross-curricular learning.

The school uses published resources and schemes to support planning and delivery, including Jigsaw and Twinkl Life where appropriate. These resources do not replace the school's responsibility to check that teaching is age-appropriate, suitable, inclusive, lawful and aligned with this policy.

Curriculum content is reviewed regularly and adapted where appropriate to reflect pupil need, safeguarding themes, online risks, national guidance, local context and feedback from pupils, parents and staff.

The school will make information available to parents about the PSHE, Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education curriculum, including the broad content taught at different stages.

EYFS

In EYFS, PSHE is embedded in daily practice and is closely linked to personal, social and emotional development.

Learning is delivered through routines, play, adult-guided activities, stories, discussion, relationships, behaviour support and the wider EYFS environment.

EYFS learning may include:

- Self-regulation
- Managing feelings
- Taking turns
- Sharing
- Kindness
- Friendship
- Boundaries
- Personal safety
- Respect for others
- Understanding rules and routines
- Developing independence
- Asking for help
- Recognising trusted adults

Teaching will be adapted to children's age, stage of development, SEND, EAL, communication needs and individual circumstances.

Junior School

In the Junior School, PSHE includes Relationships Education and Health Education.

Teaching is age-appropriate and progressive.

Key themes may include:

- Families and people who care for us
- Friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe
- Privacy and boundaries
- Mental wellbeing
- Physical health and healthy lifestyles
- Puberty and growing up
- Safe and unsafe touch
- Bullying and kindness
- Online safety

- Financial awareness
- Living in the wider world
- Fundamental British values
- Respect for difference

The Junior School does not teach sex education beyond content that forms part of Relationships Education, Health Education, science, safeguarding education and age-appropriate curriculum content on bodies, puberty, safety and growing up. If the school proposes to teach any additional sex education in the Junior School, this will be identified clearly in curriculum planning and parents will be consulted in advance.

Senior School

In the Senior School, pupils receive PSHE, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

Content is age-appropriate, progressive and responsive to pupil need.

Key themes may include:

- Healthy relationships and friendships
- Consent and the law
- Boundaries and privacy
- Intimate relationships
- Sexual health
- Contraception
- Sexually transmitted infections
- Pornography and sexual ethics
- Online behaviour and digital consent
- Sharing images and online risks
- Deepfakes, artificial intelligence misuse and digital manipulation
- Online misogyny and harmful gender stereotypes
- Coercion, harassment, abuse and exploitation
- Emotional wellbeing and mental health
- Self-esteem and body image
- Substance education
- Physical health and healthy lifestyles
- Financial literacy and economic wellbeing
- Careers and preparation for adult life
- Citizenship and fundamental British values
- Prejudice, discrimination and equality

Teaching will be balanced, factual, respectful and appropriate to pupils' age, maturity, needs and circumstances.

Safeguarding

PSHE and RSHE play an important role in safeguarding.

Lessons may help pupils recognise risk, understand boundaries, identify trusted adults, seek help, understand online safety and report concerns.

Staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if a pupil makes a disclosure or if a safeguarding, welfare or child protection concern arises during a lesson, discussion, written activity or pupil interaction.

Staff must not promise confidentiality to pupils.

Safeguarding, welfare or child protection concerns must be recorded on CPOMS.

Online safety

Online safety is taught explicitly and regularly through PSHE, RSHE and the wider curriculum.

Teaching may include:

- Digital boundaries
- Online friendships
- Online grooming
- Cyberbullying
- Image sharing
- Consent online
- Digital footprints
- Pornography
- Misinformation and disinformation
- Extremist content
- Artificial intelligence and deepfakes
- Harmful influencers
- Online misogyny
- Unsafe contact
- Reporting concerns

The Online Safety Policy contains the school's wider arrangements for online safety, filtering, monitoring and digital conduct.

Teaching sensitive topics

The school recognises that PSHE and RSHE may involve sensitive topics.

Staff will establish clear ground rules for discussion and will manage lessons in a way that is respectful, balanced, age-appropriate and safeguarding-informed.

Staff will not ask pupils to disclose personal information in class.

Pupils will be reminded how to seek support privately if a topic affects them.

Where a topic may be particularly sensitive, staff will plan carefully and seek advice from the PSHE/RSE lead, DSL, SENDCo or senior leader where appropriate.

Equality, inclusion and protected characteristics

The school will ensure that PSHE and RSHE teaching is inclusive, respectful and consistent with the Equality Act.

Teaching will take account of pupils' age, maturity, SEND, disability, EAL, religion, belief, culture, family background, boarding status and personal circumstances.

Pupils will learn about respect, equality, diversity and the importance of challenging prejudice, discrimination, bullying and harmful stereotypes.

Teaching about protected characteristics, including sexual orientation and gender reassignment, will be age-appropriate, balanced, factual, respectful and handled in accordance with statutory guidance.

The school will not promote partisan political views or present contested views as fact.

Teaching will distinguish between the law, factual information, protected characteristics, school values and contested or partisan views.

SEND, disability and EAL

The school will adapt teaching where appropriate so that pupils with SEND, disabilities, EAL or additional needs can access PSHE and RSHE.

Adaptations may include:

- Pre-teaching vocabulary
- Visual support
- Small group work
- Simplified language
- Additional pastoral support
- Adapted resources
- Staff briefing
- SENDCo or EAL support
- Individual support where needed

Where a pupil's needs require additional planning, the PSHE/RSE lead will work with the SENDCo, EAL lead, pastoral staff, parents or carers where appropriate.

Boarding

The school recognises that boarders may need additional support in relation to relationships, wellbeing, privacy, personal safety, online behaviour, cultural adjustment, homesickness, friendship issues and seeking help.

Boarding staff will support the aims of this policy through boarding routines, pastoral care, supervision, discussion, signposting and safeguarding practice.

Concerns arising in boarding must be shared with the DSL, Head of Boarding or relevant senior leader in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

External speakers and resources

External speakers may be used to support PSHE or RSHE where appropriate.

External speakers, workshops and resources must be approved in advance by the relevant senior leader, PSHE/RSE lead or DSL according to the topic and level of risk.

The school will consider:

- The suitability of the speaker or organisation
- The purpose and content of the session
- The age and needs of pupils
- Safeguarding risks
- Equality considerations
- Political impartiality
- Religious or cultural sensitivity
- The need for staff supervision
- The accuracy and appropriateness of materials
- External speakers must not replace the school's responsibility for the curriculum.
- Staff should normally remain present during sessions delivered by external speakers.
- Parent consultation and engagement

The school recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents, carers and educational guardians.

The school will consult parents on the development and review of the RSE policy and significant changes to RSE provision.

Parents will be given reasonable information about curriculum content and the opportunity to comment before significant changes are introduced.

The school will make this policy available to parents.

Parents may request to view teaching materials used for RSHE. The school will provide reasonable access to materials, taking account of copyright, safeguarding, data protection and practical considerations.

Parental feedback will be considered carefully, although the school remains responsible for ensuring that statutory requirements are met and that the curriculum is suitable for pupils.

Right to withdraw from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of RSE, except for content that forms part of the science curriculum or statutory Health Education.

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing to the Head of School.

The Head of School, or a senior leader acting on their behalf, will normally meet with parents to discuss the request, explain the curriculum content, consider the benefits of participation and discuss any concerns.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect a parent's request to withdraw their child from sex education up to and until three terms before the child turns 16.

From three terms before the pupil turns 16, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements for the pupil to receive sex education during one of those terms.

Any request for withdrawal will be handled sensitively, respectfully and with regard to the pupil's welfare.

The Head of School will confirm the outcome of the request in writing and will keep a record of the request, discussion, decision and any alternative education arrangements.

Pupil request to receive sex education

From three terms before a pupil turns 16, the pupil may request to receive sex education even if a parent has previously requested withdrawal.

Any pupil wishing to make this request may speak to their tutor, the PSHE/RSE lead, DSL, Head of Senior School or another trusted member of staff.

The request will be handled sensitively and confidentially, taking account of the pupil's age, maturity, wellbeing and safeguarding needs. The school will make arrangements for the pupil to receive sex education during one of the three terms before they turn 16.

Alternative education during withdrawal

Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will provide appropriate, purposeful alternative education during the period of withdrawal.

The school will ensure that withdrawal does not remove the pupil from Relationships Education, Health Education, safeguarding education, online safety education or curriculum content that the school is required to provide.

Pupil voice

The school will listen to pupil views on PSHE and RSHE in an age-appropriate way.

Pupil feedback may be gathered through discussion, surveys, pupil voice activities, tutor feedback, pastoral information and curriculum review.

Pupil voice will help the school understand whether teaching is accessible, relevant, respectful and effective.

Assessment

Assessment in PSHE and RSHE is primarily formative.

It may include:

- Teacher observation
- Class discussion

- Reflection activities
- Written tasks
- Scenario responses
- Pupil self-assessment
- Pupil voice
- Review of learning outcomes

Assessment will focus on understanding, confidence, skills, reflection and readiness to seek help, rather than grading personal views or experiences.

Monitoring

The PSHE/RSE lead, senior leaders and relevant staff will monitor the curriculum through:

- Curriculum mapping
- Planning review
- Lesson observation or learning walks
- Book or work review where appropriate
- Pupil voice
- Staff feedback
- Parent feedback
- Safeguarding themes
- Behaviour and wellbeing indicators
- Review of external speakers and resources

Training

Staff delivering PSHE and RSHE will receive training or guidance appropriate to their role.

Training may include:

- Statutory RSHE requirements
- Teaching sensitive topics
- Safeguarding responses
- Managing discussion
- Online safety
- Consent and healthy relationships
- Mental health and wellbeing
- SEND and adaptive teaching
- Equality and protected characteristics
- Political impartiality
- Use of approved resources

Staff should seek advice from the PSHE/RSE lead, DSL, SENDCo or senior leader where they are unsure about content, delivery or safeguarding issues.

Records

The school will keep appropriate records of PSHE and RSHE planning, curriculum mapping, consultation, materials review, parent communication, withdrawal requests, staff training and monitoring.

Safeguarding, welfare or child protection concerns must be recorded on CPOMS.

Curriculum, parent communication, attendance, pastoral, SEND, EAL and administrative records may be recorded on iSAMS or other school records where appropriate.

Records will be handled in accordance with the Data Protection Policy, privacy notices and Records Retention Schedule.

Roles and responsibilities

The Head of School has overall responsibility for this policy.

The PSHE/RSE lead is responsible for coordinating curriculum planning, resources, delivery, monitoring and review.

The DSL supports safeguarding content, staff awareness and responses to concerns.

The Head of EYFS supports age-appropriate provision in EYFS.

The SENDCo supports adaptation for pupils with SEND, disabilities or additional needs.

Tutors, class teachers and teaching staff support delivery and pupil discussion.

Pastoral staff and boarding staff support pupil wellbeing and follow-up.

The Directors maintain oversight of statutory compliance, policy approval and review.

Complaints and concerns

Parents, carers, educational guardians or pupils may raise questions or concerns about PSHE or RSHE with the relevant teacher, tutor, PSHE/RSE lead, Head of EYFS, Head of Junior School, Head of Senior School, DSL or Head of School.

Where concerns cannot be resolved informally, the Complaints Policy should be followed.

Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following a significant curriculum change, safeguarding theme, parent consultation, change in law, change in guidance or change in school provision.