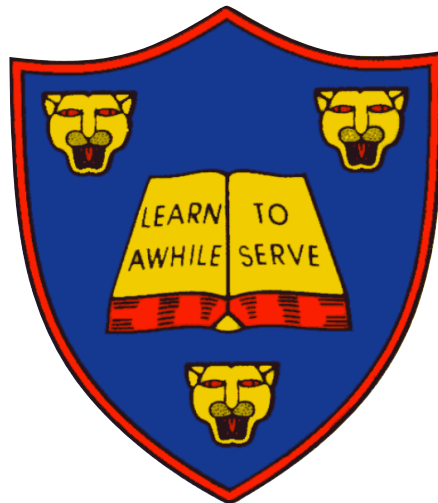


# Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School



## Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Policy

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Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

## Contents

Our intent	3-4
Legislation	4
Implementation of PSHE	5
Teaching	5
How our curriculum is organised	5 - 9
Essential knowledge - the 'jigsaw pieces' in greater detail	
How we teach Health and Wellbeing	10 - 14
How we teach 'Changing Me'	15 - 16
Protected characteristics	15-16
Inclusion	16
Safeguarding	17
Difficult questions	18



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

### **Intent**

Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School aims to teach Personal, Social and Health Education using a robust, comprehensive whole-school approach with the aim of creating a community and environment that respects, supports, encourages and safeguards each and every pupil. The children understand that everyone is welcome here and everyone has a right to an education.

We focus upon teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults, including online.

This starts with pupils being taught about what a relationship is, what friendship is, what family means and who the people are who can support them. From the beginning of their school journey, pupils are taught how to take turns, how to treat each other with kindness, consideration and respect, the importance of honesty and truthfulness, permission-seeking and giving, and the concept of personal privacy.

Establishing personal space and boundaries, showing respect and understanding the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical contact are the necessary building blocks for teaching consent - which happens at secondary school.

We teach respect for others in an age-appropriate way, in terms of understanding our own and others' boundaries through play, and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources and so on.

From the beginning, teachers talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter. Drawing attention to these in a range of contexts enables pupils to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security. This will also help them to recognise any less positive relationships when they encounter them.

The principles of positive relationships also apply online. When teaching about healthy relationships, teachers address online safety and appropriate behaviour in a way that is relevant to pupils' lives. This is complemented by a robust e-safety strand which runs through our Computing curriculum.

Teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on the knowledge of pupils and their circumstances. Families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for our children. We take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances and needs, to reflect sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them; for example, looked after children or young carers.



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

We deliberately support learners to cultivate the character traits and positive personal attributes, which help them to develop positive relationships. As a whole-school, we develop and practise resilience and other positive character traits - for example, helping pupils to believe they can achieve, persevere with tasks, work towards long-term rewards and continue despite setbacks. Our assembly curriculum also helps to embed an understanding of the importance of self-respect and self-worth, and personal attributes including honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This is further developed a variety of engaging ways, including providing planned opportunities for our pupils to undertake social action, active citizenship and voluntary service to others locally or more widely. Our children work alongside local charities, visit care homes, participate in global campaigns and more so that they understand now that their actions can really make a difference.

Relationships Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing.

Through Relationships Education, we teach pupils the knowledge that they need to recognise and to report abuse, including emotional, physical and sexual abuse. As such, this is a vital strand of our safeguarding policy. Our focus is upon the recognition and establishing of appropriate boundaries and privacy (for example, using 'The Pants Song' and 'Hopscotch Boundaries song' in lower school. We ensure all young people understand that they have rights over their own bodies. This also includes understanding boundaries in friendships with peers, in families and with others in all contexts, including online.

Pupils know how to report concerns and seek advice when they suspect or know that something is wrong. At all stages, it is important to balance teaching children about making sensible decisions to stay safe (including online) whilst being clear it is never the fault of a child who is abused and why victim blaming is always wrong. These subjects complement Health Education and as part of our comprehensive programme and whole school approach, this knowledge supports safeguarding children.

### Legislation

**“The duties on schools in this area are set out in legislation.** 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** and relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. They also make **health education compulsory in all schools** except independent schools. Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in independent schools. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.” (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2025)



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

### Implementation

This policy outlines Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School's approach to teaching two discrete but increasingly interrelated curriculum strands:

**PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education):** The overarching, mostly non-statutory framework covering health, relationships, and economic wellbeing/careers.

**RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education):** The statutory, compulsory part. It also includes Relationships Education and Health Education.

Relationships education does not involve explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity.

This policy responds to the updated 2025 DfE guidance which introduces a greater emphasis upon mental health, online safety (AI), and financial literacy.

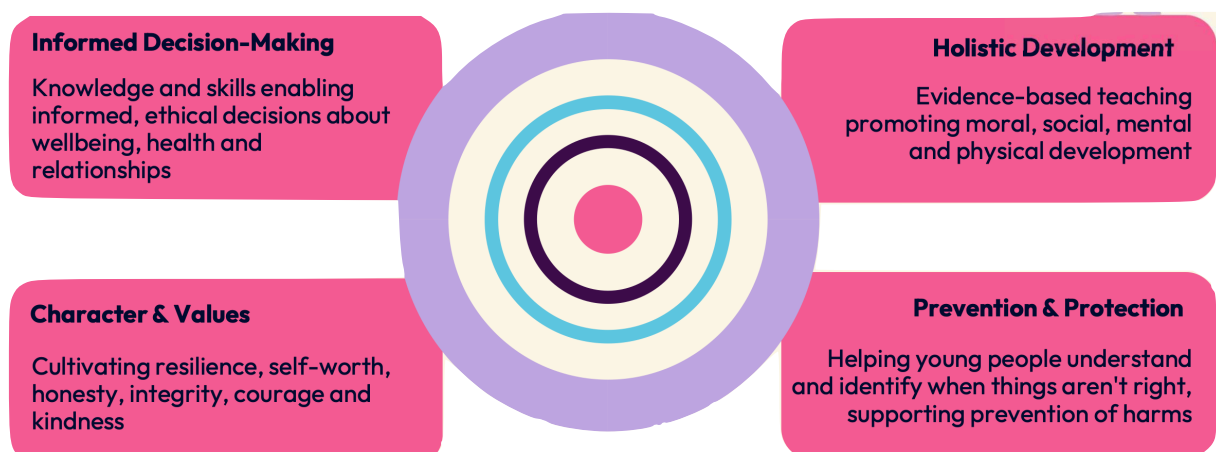
#### **This curriculum is taught interdisciplinarily:**

- Throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework
- During weekly PSHE lessons
- Through thematic, values-drive assemblies
- Throughout the wider curriculum (for example, there is significant overlap with Science, P.E., R.E. and Computing)

### Teaching

Our teachers are expert practitioners who adapt pedagogies so as to enable all learners to be at their best. **Our school uses a comprehensive PSHE program, including the delivery of the mandatory RSHE requirements. We use the award winning Jigsaw Education curriculum planning and resources** to ensure that learning is sequential, age appropriate, provides ample opportunities for retrieval to consolidate learning, and builds incrementally upon what has come before. This curriculum has been comprehensively updated to align with the DfE's 2025 Relationships, Sex and Health Education guidance.

In response to the statutory guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (2025), replacing the 2019 guidance, our whole school approach is comprised of the following 4 core principles:





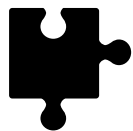
Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

**Our lessons:**

	Taught by practitioners with expert knowledge of curriculum content and inclusive pedagogies.	Class teachers always teach each 'Changing Me' unit.	
	A Changing Me unit per year in Summer 2		One lesson per week
	Lessons are whole class. Everyone accesses the full depth and breadth of the subject.		Include structured opportunities for asking questions and discussion.
	Follow a whole school spiral curriculum but are adapted to meet the needs of all learners.		Are fully inclusive for all learners. Everyone is welcome here.

**Our curriculum organisation:**

Our approach is organised around the following:



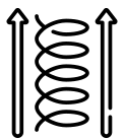
**Six puzzle themes**

- Themes revisited annually with increasing depth
- Contextualises learning across year groups



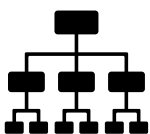
**Whole school approach**

- Learning reinforced through assemblies, songs, celebrations
- Community engagement and support
- Brings PSHE alive beyond lessons



**Structured spiral curriculum**

- Age-appropriate content building foundations for later learning
- Flexible delivery meeting individual children's needs
- Multiple opportunities to revisit and develop understanding



**Lesson structure**

- Safe, inclusive learning environment
- Development of SEL embedded throughout
- Clear, simple slides support pupil understanding and engagement



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

### Essential knowledge - The 'jigsaw pieces' in greater detail:



#### **Families and people who care for me**

By the time they leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, pupils should know:

1. That families are important for children growing up safe and happy because they can provide love, security and stability.
2. The characteristics of safe and happy family life, such as commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
3. That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.
4. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of safe and happy families and are important for children's security as they grow up.
5. That marriage and civil partnerships represent a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
6. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.



#### **Caring friendships**

By the time they leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, pupils should know:

1. How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
2. That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships.
3. That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it.
4. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties.
5. That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened.
6. How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right.
7. How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School



### **Respectful relationships**

Since 2025, there is a greater focus on self esteem, setting and respecting boundaries, building resilience and knowing where and how to find support.

By the time they leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, pupils should know:

1. How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated.
2. The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults.
3. How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.
4. Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs.
5. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs.
6. Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships.
7. The conventions of courtesy and manners.
8. The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests.
9. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help.
10. What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype.
11. How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.



### **Online relationships**

Since 2025, we have responded to enhanced online safety requirements (critical evaluation of materials, social media age limits, awareness of upsetting content)

By the time they leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, pupils should know:

1. That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure.

2. How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this.
3. That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.
4. The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online.
5. Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up.
6. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.



### Being safe

By the time they leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, pupils should know:

1. What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc.
2. The concept of privacy and its implications for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
3. That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact.
4. How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know.
5. How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust.
6. How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
7. How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.

**Please see below for information about puzzle piece 6: Changing Me.**



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

### How we teach statutory Health and Wellbeing Content

“Health education in primary starts with the benefits and importance of physical activity, good nutrition and sufficient sleep, and supports pupils to develop emotional awareness. Schools should emphasise the relationships between physical health and mental wellbeing, and the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors.”

Our curriculum coverage is organised into the following core strands:



✓ General Wellbeing

✓ Wellbeing Online

✓ Physical Health and Fitness

✓ Healthy Eating

✓ Drugs Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping

✓ Health Protection and Prevention

✓ Personal Safety

✓ Basic First Aid

✓ Developing Bodies

In response to the 2025 legislation, we:

- have introduced a greater focus on actively promoting physical and mental health, recognising and what is appropriate and proportionate, and when to seek help and support.
- teach children about online behaviours including to greater depth: safety and rights, relationships, gaming (including addiction), potential financial harms, social media, apps, sharing images, impact on physical health and offline relationships.
- Teach, with additional clarity, the specific vocabulary for external body parts.
- Teach the children about menstruation at the age recommended by the DfE.
- Have included new topics on safety in and out of the home, including fire, water, road and rail.



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

### Health Education objectives in greater detail

#### General wellbeing

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation.
2. The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.
3. The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
4. How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary to talk about their own and others' feelings.
5. How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate.
6. That isolation and loneliness can affect children, and the benefits of seeking support.
7. That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others.
8. That change and loss, including bereavement, can provoke a range of feelings, that grief is a natural response to bereavement, and that everyone grieves differently.
9. Where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including who in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online).
10. That it is common to experience mental health problems, and early support can help.

#### Wellbeing online

This strand is complemented by our Computing curriculum policy.

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. That for almost everyone the internet is an integral part of life. Pupils should be supported to think about positive and negative aspects of the internet.
2. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection.
3. The benefits of limiting time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
4. How to consider the impact of their online behaviour on others, and how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.
5. Why social media, some apps, computer games and online gaming, including gambling sites, are age restricted.
6. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.
7. How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content, including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them.



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

8. That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact wellbeing. How to seek support from trusted adults.
9. How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines, and know how information is selected and targeted.
10. That they have rights in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and consent.
11. Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

### **Physical health and fitness**

This strand is complemented by our Physical Education curriculum policy.

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle.
2. The importance of building regular physical activity into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity.
3. The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle, including obesity.
4. How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.

### **Healthy eating**

This strand is complemented by our Design Technology curriculum policy.

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content).
2. Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food.
3. The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
4. The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).

### **Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping**

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction, which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

### **Health protection and prevention**

This strand is complemented by our Science curriculum policy.

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.
2. About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer.
3. The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in the bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn.
4. About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth, and regular check-ups at the dentist.
5. About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing.
6. The facts and scientific evidence relating to vaccination and immunisation. The introduction of topics relating to vaccination and immunisation should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.

### **Personal safety**

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks.
2. How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.

### **Basic first aid**

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them.
2. Concepts of basic first aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.

### **Developing bodies**

This strand is complemented by our Science curriculum policy.

By the time pupils leave Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School, they will know:

1. About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed as a stage in this process.



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

2. The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private and have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts.
3. The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.



## Changing Me - Sex Education

We teach a 'Changing Me' Jigsaw unit each year during **the final Summer half term**, when the children are most comfortable with their class teacher and at their most mature for each age and stage.

As with the other Jigsaw pieces, learning is age appropriate, and clearly mapped in a progressive way so that sex education and puberty content is taught appropriately.

**Lessons are always taught by the class' substantive class teacher**, with whom they have the most secure, trusting relationship.

### Good safeguarding practice:

*"requires young people to understand the correct terms for different parts of the body and to be able to confidently use these terms. This can be provided as part of health education in primary, without describing any detail of sexual activity."*

"Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools, but we recommend that primaries teach sex education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science. The national curriculum for science includes subject content in related areas, such as the main external body parts, the human body as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty) and reproduction in some plants and animals. Schools may also cover human reproduction in the science curriculum, but where they do so, this should be in line with the factual description of conception in the science curriculum." ('Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025))

## Working closely with parents and carers

Before we begin teaching this unit, **all parents and carers receive a curriculum update from class teachers sharing what will be taught and why we believe this to be appropriate and important for our children**. This is sent out in good time ahead of the delivery of each unit each year so that parents have sufficient time to digest the content and to meet with each class teacher to discuss this should they require further clarity or have any questions. Parents and carers do have a right to withdraw their children from lessons covering Sex Education content, but not puberty as this forms part of the statutory Science curriculum. Puberty content enabling pupils to appropriately name their genitalia is statutory.

## Protected Characteristics education

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149), when teaching RSHE. Schools must ensure topics in RSHE are taught in a way which does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

There is no statutory expectation for the explicit teaching of Protected Characteristics through RSHE in primary schools. However, as a school, we believe that this is essential learning for our pupils as they become empathetic, kind people who respect the equal rights of everyone in our community. As such, we



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

embed a reflection, discussion and celebration of difference in our communities without our learning sequences.

In conjunction with our Religious Education policy, we teach about different faith perspectives, and are sensitive to religious backgrounds. Parents do not have a right to withdraw from statutory RSHE content.

“RSHE should be sensitive to the religious background of pupils, and schools must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics. All schools may teach about faith perspectives on these topics.” (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025))

Our teaching “should illustrate a wide range of family structures in a positive way” (2025) including same-sex parents.

“We strongly encourage primary schools to teach about healthy loving relationships, and to include same-sex parents along with other family arrangements when discussing families.” (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025))

“Pupils should also be taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment. This should recognise that people have legal rights by virtue of their biological sex which are different from the rights of those of the opposite sex with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Pupils should also be taught to recognise that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, as with the other protected characteristics, have protection from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity.” (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025))<sup>1</sup>

### **Inclusion**

As with all of our lessons, our teachers are expert practitioners who adapt their teaching pedagogies in ways which enable all learners to thrive. Teachers lead all PSHE lessons as they know their children best and have formed trusting relationships with each pupil which enable them to be vulnerable and ask questions.

Teachers are supported by our SENDCo and appropriate external experts to support our team to ensure teaching is developed so that these subjects are accessible for pupils with SEND and prepare pupils for secondary school, as set out in the SEND code of practice.

We are aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities. As such, pupils are never removed from these lessons to access other interventions. These lessons are seen as being a core component of our safeguarding commitment to our children.

### **Safeguarding**

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<sup>1</sup> For further information on specific government guidance, please consult the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025)



## Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

Discussions about sensitive topics in RSHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused, including those who have seen, heard or experienced the effects of domestic abuse. Our team are vigilant to safeguarding concerns and follow our Safeguarding Policy at all times. Everyone is aware of who our Designated Safeguarding Leads are, including visitors. Everyone is a leader of safeguarding at Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School.

The Department has published statutory safeguarding guidance [Keeping children safe in education](#) (KCSIE); this guidance provides a strong safeguarding framework and is clear on the actions a school or college should take if there are any concerns about a child or young person's wellbeing and/or safety. All staff are highly familiar with this in conjunction with our own school approach.

Staff are also aware of mandatory reporting duties, including relating to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), and that virginity testing and hymenoplasty became illegal in 2022. Our team are aware that the Government is also introducing a new law which will create a legal requirement for anyone in regulated activity relating to children in England, including teachers, to report if they are made aware a child is being sexually abused. Where lessons are delivered by external agencies, we agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor. However, visitors are always accompanied by the class teacher at all times.

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately. Part 1 of KCSIE sets out the process staff should follow when they have concerns about a child. Staff should handle personal information with due care and know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child. It is equally important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report, about themselves or a peer. Pupils should also understand where they can report any concerns and seek help, including to external services if they do not feel comfortable talking to school staff. Children are taught who their network of support is - their Big 5.

If staff have a concern about a risk of pupils experiencing or perpetrating harms, they should follow our rigorous child protection policy and speak to the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy). The designated safeguarding lead has knowledge of trusted, high-quality local support that can be engaged, links to the police and other agencies and awareness of local issues which it may be appropriate to address in lessons.



Stratford-upon-Avon Primary School

## **Managing difficult questions**

Pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. Teachers handle such questions with sensitivity and with an emphasis on supporting the child without shaming them in anyway. Children should feel comfortable to be vulnerable and questioning within a safe space. In most instances, the teacher will ask whether they can think about this and discuss it at a later point, perhaps necessitating a quiet conversation away from the child's peers. Other strategies may include asking a pupil to speak to their parents or a trusted adult, or signposting to support services where needed.

Teachers recognise that children whose questions go unanswered might instead turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online. Teachers who are unsure of how to handle questions should seek advice from a DSL.



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## Appendix 1

### **Guidance on 'Parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education'**

from Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025)

16. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

17. Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, it is good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents, and the child if appropriate, to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate. Schools will want to document this process to ensure a record is kept.

18. Where primary schools provide sex education, head teachers must automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from it, other than content that is taught as part of the science curriculum. In secondary, head teachers can refuse a request in exceptional circumstances, for example because of safeguarding concerns or a pupil's specific vulnerability.

19. From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. For example, if a pupil turns 16 during the autumn term, the pupil can opt back into sex education at any time after the start of the previous autumn term. Schools should ensure that pupils know they have this option.

20. If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

21. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

22. Everyone has relationships with others, and most pupils will develop sexual relationships at some point in their lives. Relationships education should equip pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to act with kindness and respect in all their relationships as they grow into adulthood, to enjoy their relationships, and to keep themselves and others safe.

23. Relationships education will focus on how to form and sustain positive relationships but will also help children identify risks and harms. Relationships education may therefore include topics related to preventing sexual abuse, for example, or avoiding sharing inappropriate material online. This can be done without describing the detail of any sexual activity involved. Similarly, good safeguarding practice requires young people to understand the correct terms for different parts of the body and to be able to confidently use these terms. This can be provided as part of health education in primary, without describing any detail of sexual activity