Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Northern Federation

Date of policy approval: Autumn term 2026

Policy review date: Autumn term 2028

Approved by: Governors

1. Policy development & review

As part of the statutory requirements for Relationships, Sex & Health Education, all primary schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships Education and/or RSE if additional non-statutory sex education is taught. Schools should ensure that the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the community they serve. Schools must proactively engage and consult parents when developing and reviewing their policy, ensuring parents understand that effective RSHE is important for promoting and protecting the wellbeing of all children.

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils, and parents. The process for this involved a full online parent consultation about the content and sequence of our curriculum. Pupils needs, social understanding and local environmental influences were considered. Governors also fully reviewed the contents of the curriculum and intent at a full governing body meeting.

This policy aims to provide guidance and information on all aspects of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in the school for staff, parents/carers and governors and other stakeholders.

2. Statutory and legal requirements

Current regulations and statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) state that Relationships & Health Education must be taught in all primary schools in England from September 2020. This guidance was updated in July 2025 for implementation from September 2026.

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, but the DfE 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.

The statutory guidance document has been reviewed to ensure that our school policy and approach are in line with statutory requirements and established best practice. Information on statutory requirements, including the current statutory guidance document from the DfE, can be found in Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance. At our school, we deliver Relationships Education/RSE, as set out in this policy, in line with current statutory duties and requirements.

As a maintained school, we must provide Relationships & Sex Education to all pupils in line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSE in our school, we must have regard for guidance issued by the Secretary of State, as required by the Education Act 1996. Legislation and guidance documents that inform our school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996).
- Learning and Skills Act (2000).
- Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- Equality Act (2010).

- Keeping children safe in education (2025).
- Children and Social Work Act (2017).
- Relationships Education, Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025).

3. Definition and aims of RSE

At Northern Federation we believe that our pupils need to be educated in Relationships Education and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) as part of a broad and balanced curriculum that develops the whole child and supports their personal development, health and wellbeing. We define Relationships Education as learning about personal, physical, social, moral, cultural and emotional development. It includes understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, and different kinds of family life, friendships and other relationships. It also involves acquiring information and developing and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes that help pupils to form and maintain healthy relationships and connections.

We define sex education as understanding the reproduction and conception in humans in line with what pupils learn about conception and birth as part of the national curriculum for science.

The Department for Education (DfE), paragraph 30 of the updated RSHE guidance (2025): "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."

At Northern Federation we teach sex education in upper key stage 2.

In 2026/2027 whilst Year 6 are a pure year group, this unit is taught as ' only two lessons in "Safety and the Changing Body" unit

1. **Lesson 5: Conception**
2. **Lesson 6: Pregnancy and Birth**

From 2027/2028 onward, as we move to teaching mixed age classes, this will be delivered to Year 5 and 6 during Cycle B, Summer 2 – "Sex education - How do people become parents and carers?"

We consider effective Relationships Education and RSE to be a vital part of the school approach to effective safeguarding. We believe Relationships Education and RSE are important for our pupils and our school because they help to keep everyone safe, happy and healthy.

The aims of RSE in our setting link closely to our school values of being **empowered with kindness and knowledge**. Self kindness and shared knowledge support children to feel comfortable with their own body and the changes they experience in life over time.

At an appropriate age for our pupils, part of our school provision also includes the teaching of relevant additional non-statutory sex education to complement pupils' wider understanding of human development and relationships. Any non-statutory sex education content is clearly identified

in our curriculum overview (see appendix). Further information can be found in the 'Working with parents/Parents' right to withdraw' section of this policy. Relationships Education and RSE are not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity. Instead, they support understanding and acceptance of the diverse relationships that exist within our school community, in modern Britain and beyond.

We ensure that any Relationships Education and RSE we deliver are inclusive and meet the needs of all our pupils, including those pupils who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

4. Curriculum

Our Relationships Education and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) curriculum and policy have been developed in consultation with parents, pupils, governors and staff, in line with current statutory guidance and with regard to best practice around the age and needs of our pupils.

The PSHE/RSE subject lead is responsible for overseeing and organising the Relationships Education/RSE curriculum. This includes supporting curriculum planning and development, supporting teachers and ensuring that resources used are in line with our curriculum plan and school policy

Relationships Education/RSE is delivered as part of our PSHE programme. Through this, we aim to provide pupils with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy and independent lives and to become informed, active and responsible citizens. Our provision intends to help young people develop confidence in talking about and considering relationships that we all have.

Relationships Education/RSE is taught gradually across key stages so that learning builds year by year in a way that is appropriate to pupils' age and maturity. This approach responds to the pupils' needs and supports them to manage the opportunities and challenges they may face as they grow up.

At Northern Federation, we use the Kapow Primary RSE/PSHE scheme of work as the basis for our Relationships Education/RSE provision.

As a school, we have evaluated the content of bespoke designed curriculums against the needs of our children. We believe **KAPOW** offers us a full and well-rounded PSHE and RSE curriculum, with content related to core principles:

For Reception aged children:

- Self-regulation: My Feelings
- Managing Self: Taking on challenges
- Self-Regulation: Listening and following instructions
- Building relationships: Family and Friends
- Managing myself: My Wellbeing

For children in Years 1 to 6, following the national curriculum the content is focussed on the following core principles:

- Connecting with others
- The online world
- Health protection
- Staying safe
- My healthy self
- Citizenship
- Growing up

Our Relationships Education/RSE provision is mapped to the statutory requirements for Relationships Education and Health Education. Related content is also taught through other curriculum subjects, such as religious education and science. Pupils also explore related themes through assemblies, whole school projects and events, where appropriate.

Relationships Education/RSE is delivered through timetabled curriculum lessons as part of our PSHE and RSE curriculum. Related statutory elements are also delivered through science, in line with the National curriculum.

As part of our PSHE and RSE curriculum, we cover a range of topics and learning outcomes that support Relationships Education/RSE across the school. For further information about our Relationships Education/RSE curriculum, see the curriculum overview in Appendix 1. Any non-statutory sex education content is clearly highlighted for reference.

5. Delivery of RSE

Our Relationships Education/RSE curriculum is delivered predominantly by teachers or other staff within our school from Years 1 to 6 and forms part of our timetabled Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) education programme.

We recognise that external visitors can add value to the teaching and delivery of Relationships Education/RSE due to their specialist knowledge or expertise. On occasion, appropriately experienced visitors may contribute to the delivery of Relationships Education/RSE. Relevant school policies, including this policy, are shared with any visitors prior to delivery to ensure expectations are clear. School staff are always present during sessions delivered by visitors, and visitors are expected to work in line with this policy and other relevant school policies.

Creating a safe learning environment is a vital part of effective Relationships Education/RSE delivery, particularly where sensitive or complex issues may be explored. Our school supports pupils to develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships in a safe and secure way.

To support this, a range of strategies are used, including:

- Establishing clear ground rules or learning agreements with pupils on boundaries in lessons.
- Using 'distancing' techniques and strategies.
- Understanding how to discuss sensitive topics, questions or comments from pupils.
- Using age-appropriate materials.
- Encouraging reflection and discussion.

A wide variety of best-practice teaching and learning approaches are used within the Kapow RSE/PSHE programme to support effective and sensitive delivery of Relationships Education/RSE. These include:

- Film-clips/graphics.
- Scenarios and stories.
- Images and visual prompts.
- Reflection and discussions activities (i.e. whole class, small groups, paired etc.).
- Role play.
- Problem-solving activities.
- Independent, paired and group work.
- The use of anonymous question boxes.

Staff receive training where required to support safe and effective delivery, including how to manage sensitive topics and pupil questions. During Relationships Education/RSE lessons, pupils are encouraged to ask appropriate questions in line with the agreed boundaries/ground rules established. Any questions arising from pupils are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil concerned, and if the teacher delivering the session deems it appropriate to answer.

Teaching staff aim to answer questions honestly and factually, within the scope of the curriculum. Where a question is not age-appropriate, falls outside the curriculum, or a member of staff does not feel it is appropriate to answer in class, pupils may be supported individually or signposted to parents or carers, who have the primary responsibility for discussing sensitive matters.

This approach ensures pupils receive accurate, non-judgmental answers while respecting parental rights and maintaining the integrity of the school's curriculum.

When delivering Relationships Education/RSE, teachers are sensitive to the differing needs of pupils and ensure that appropriate adaptations to learning materials are made so they are inclusive, engaging, safe and accessible to all pupils, including any those with additional needs or those with SEND.

The DfE makes it clear that schools should make provision for how teachers will answer questions that may be asked by pupils about topics in sex education that the school does not cover, or that relate to sex education from which a child has been withdrawn.

Our school delivers Relationships Education and Health Education in the primary phase, as required by statutory guidance. We also deliver additional non-statutory sex education lessons in Year 6 that cover conception and the birth of a baby, where the parental right of withdrawal applies.

If pupils ask about sex education topics that are not covered in our primary programme (for example, contraception, sexual activity, explicit sexual content), teachers redirect the conversation to the learning being covered, remind pupils of agreed ground rules on asking questions and where they can seek help or advice from trusted adults. If teachers have concerns regarding any question asked by pupils, they follow school safeguarding procedures.

In responding, teachers use a neutral script such as: "That's a thoughtful question. It's not part of our learning today, so we are not going to explore it in class. If you are worried about anything then you can talk to me or another trusted adult privately outside of the lesson"

If a pupil who has been withdrawn from sex education lessons asks a question about withdrawn content, teachers will not answer in class and will use a neutral script such as: "That question is about content your parent has asked us not to cover with you in school. Let's make sure an adult follows this up with you safely."

Parents will be informed that their child has asked a question which they may need to follow-up with their child and offer guidance for discussing it at home if needed. If teachers have concerns regarding any question asked by pupils, they follow school safeguarding procedures.

As part of our Relationships Education/RSE delivery, pupils are supported to understand who they can speak to in school if they have concerns or worries about anything that has been covered. Building children's ability to understand that there is always help available from trusted adults is an important cross-cutting element of our PSHE and RSE provision. We also signpost pupils to other reliable external service and sources of help and support, such as Childline.

6. Inclusion

It is our intention that all pupils have the opportunity to experience a programme of Relationships Education/Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) at a level that is appropriate for their age and cognitive development, with differentiated provision where required. We operate a fully inclusive ethos in our school. Lesson plans and content are adapted by the subject lead and teachers where necessary to ensure that all pupils can effectively access Relationships Education/RSE learning.

Our school recognises that there are different ethnic, religious and cultural beliefs and attitudes around Relationships Education/RSE topics, as well as acknowledging that pupils may come from a variety of different family types and backgrounds. These differences are reflected through teaching and resources that promote diversity and inclusion in Relationships Education/RSE.

During PSHE and RSE sessions, objective discussion of the diversity of the community we serve, and wider society in modern Britain, is approached in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner so that all pupils have access to lessons that are inclusive and based on a factual understanding of the law.

We are mindful of statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted, and of the legal responsibilities placed upon schools by the Equality Act (2010) to promote inclusion, mutual respect and the protection of protected characteristics. Relationships Education/RSE provides an

opportunity to support the discharge of these duties in a safe and appropriate environment. The full Act can be viewed here: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

All schools in England have a legal responsibility to eliminate discrimination and are required to raise pupils' understanding and awareness of diversity and to promote respectful relationships with those who are different from them.

7. Safeguarding and confidentiality

Confidentiality in Relationships Education/Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) lessons is managed in line with the school's confidentiality policy. A member of staff can never promise unconditional confidentiality to pupils if concerns exist or disclosures are made during lessons. Staff ensure that pupils are made aware that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed and that there are procedures that must be followed. The school's safeguarding protocols are followed at all times.

Through the ground rules established as part of creating a safe learning environment in all PSHE and RSE lessons, pupils are reminded that personal questions or sensitive information should not be shared in an open classroom environment. Pupils are also reminded that they can speak to a member of staff or another trusted adult if they have any questions, worries or concerns.

Teachers are aware that effective Relationships Education/RSE, which includes developing an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in different relationships, may sometimes lead to disclosures of safeguarding concerns by pupils. If this occurs, the member of staff informs the head teacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), in line with the school's safeguarding policy.

All staff are trained to handle questions and disclosures sensitively. If a pupil's question or comment raises a safeguarding concern, staff follow the school's safeguarding policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately. Confidentiality is respected as far as possible, but safeguarding always takes priority.

Ground rules are used within lessons to help manage disclosures and behaviour, alongside other strategies that support the creation of a safe learning environment.

8. Working with parents/Parents' right to withdraw

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children and have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

At Northern Federation, we are committed to working closely with parents to ensure that we create the best possible Relationships Education/Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) curriculum for our pupils, while also supporting parents in the conversations they may have with their children around these topics. We aim to build a partnership approach with parents towards Relationships Education/RSE provision, where transparency and respectful understanding are the basis for all discussions. Parents are always welcome to contact the school to view resources and discuss any questions or concerns with the headteacher or subject lead.

As set out in Department for Education (DfE) requirements, schools should show parents a representative sample of the resources they plan to use, enabling parents to continue conversations started in class, and should ensure that parents are able to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE on request. To meet this duty, we provide samples of materials during parent information events held in school, where appropriate. Parents who wish to view additional RSHE/PSHE teaching materials are asked to contact the school to arrange an appointment, during which the headteacher and/or subject lead will share information, resources and discuss any specific topics, issues or concerns. This approach supports open discussion and helps build understanding of the context of our RSHE/PSHE provision across the school.

Our school values transparency and partnership with parents and carers in delivering high-quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). In line with statutory guidance, we will:

1. Provide access to RSHE curriculum materials

o Parents and carers may request to view materials used in R(S)HE lessons, including those from external providers.

2. Offer multiple ways to view resources

o Representative samples of lesson plans and teaching resources are shared during parent information sessions where these are held.

o Additional materials can be viewed by appointment at school or via secure online access, where this is feasible.

3. Engage parents proactively

o We may hold R(S)HE information sessions to explain the curriculum approach and answer questions.

o Parents are informed of any significant changes to R(S)HE content and invited to share feedback.

4. Safeguarding and copyright considerations

o While we aim to provide full transparency, some resources may be subject to copyright restrictions. In these cases, parents are offered supervised viewing in school.

o All sharing of materials complies with safeguarding and data protection policies.

This approach ensures that parents are fully informed and able to support their child's learning at home, while maintaining compliance with statutory requirements.

Parents are given opportunities to understand the purpose and context of Relationships Education/RSE as part of our approach to pupils' personal development. We recognise that clear communication, opportunities to ask questions and open discussion help build confidence in the curriculum, and we provide opportunities to support this by providing timely updates about the content of our curriculum through curriculum newsletters.

While we believe that all content within our PSHE and RSE curriculum is important and relevant for pupils, parents have the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all non-statutory sex education lessons, other than those that form part of the National curriculum for science.

Please refer to our programme overview document (Appendix 1), which clearly highlights any lessons where sex education is delivered and where the parental right of withdrawal applies.

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

In line with current DfE statutory guidance, there is no parental right of withdrawal from Relationships Education or Health Education, or from any sex education content that forms part of the National curriculum for science. These are statutory requirements that schools are required to teach.

We view the partnership between home and school as vital in providing context around the themes covered in Relationships Education/RSE. We keep parents and carers informed by publishing an overview of the programme and this policy on the school website, and by providing further information and examples of teaching resources on request. Parents may also view curriculum materials and discuss content and delivery with the subject lead if required.

We acknowledge that parents and carers have an important role to play in Relationships Education/RSE and should feel confident that the school's programme complements and supports their parenting role. We may choose to hold additional parent meetings or events to support parents' understanding of our approach and rationale.

We ask parents to consider the proven contribution that age-appropriate sex education can make in keeping pupils safe and preparing them for adulthood.

If parents wish to request that their child be withdrawn from any non-statutory sex education, they should contact the co-headteachers via the school office. Parents are invited to a meeting to discuss concerns and view relevant teaching resources. If parents choose to proceed with withdrawal, the request is recorded and alternative provision is made for the pupil during these sessions so that they are not present in the lesson.

It is important that parents who choose to withdraw their child from sex education understand that discussing these issues with their child then becomes their responsibility.

9. Roles and responsibilities

The following is a summary of some of the key expectations relating to roles and responsibilities within our school community for Relationships Education/Relationships & Sex Education (RSE). This list is not exhaustive, but provides a clear reference point for the main expectations.

Governors/Trustees will:

- Approve the Relationships Education/RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation based on statutory duties.

- Ensure that governors are supportive of the school's policy, aims and objectives relating to Relationships Education/RSE.

The Co-headteachers are responsible for:

The headteacher is responsible for making sure that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing all resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSHE (Year 6 lessons related to conception).

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE
- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphoboia, sexual violence/harassment, derogatory behaviour and stereotypes
- Where misogynistic ideas are expressed at school, challenging the ideas, rather than the person expressing them
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Pupils will:

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses and support networks such as MHST, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

11. Monitoring and evaluation of Relationships Education/RSE

Our aim is to provide Relationships Education/RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, based on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we regularly review our curriculum to evaluate its effectiveness.

The PSHE and the Co-Headteacher are responsible for monitoring and evaluating provision to ensure that the programme is effective and impactful.

The subject lead reports to the headteacher and governors and makes information available as requested.

Monitoring and evaluation may include:

- Monitoring of planning.
- Lesson observations.
- Learning walks.
- Work scrutiny.
- Pupil voice activities.
- Staff feedback.
- Parent feedback and engagement.
- Surveys.
- Consideration of local or school level sources of data (for example, behaviour, health or safeguarding information).

Teachers are expected to reflect on their delivery of Relationships Education/RSE and provide feedback to the subject lead to support ongoing development of the subject.

Appendices

Further information is available for parents on the Kapow website:

https://www.kapowprimary.com/subjects/rse-pshe/curriculum/rse-pshe-parent-information/

Red outline unit indicates where parents have the right to withdraw their child from non-statutory sex-education.

Year 6 2026/27 only

Year 6	My healthy self: How do my choices today shape my future	Connecting with others: What does it mean to stand up for myself and others?	The online world: How do I feel about the things I see online?	Citizenship: How can we protect everyone's rights?	Staying safe: How can I stay safe as I grow up?	Sex education: How do people become parents and carers? 2 options

Ask me anything...

Cycle A (2026/27 applicable to EYFS- Year 5) (For all year groups from 2028 in the mixed age cycle from there on)

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
EYFS	*Updated* Self-regulation: My feelings	*Updated* Self-regulation: My feelings	Managing self: Taking on challenges	Self-regulation: Listening and following instructions	Building relationships: My family and friends	Managing self: My wellbeing
Year 1/2	Connecting with others: How can I help myself and others feel happy and safe?	The online world: How do we spend time online?	Health protection: How can I protect myself and others in daily life?	Staying safe: How can I stay safe?	Connecting with others: How can I build safe, kind and caring relationships with others?	The online world: How can we stay safe online?
Year 3/4	Connecting with others: What helps us feel safe and included?	The online world: How should we communicate online?	Citizenship: What careers do people choose and why?	Staying safe: What signs help me recognise what is safe or unsafe?	Connecting with others: How can we respect each other?	The online world: How can we decide what to trust online?
Year 5/6	Connecting with others: Why are healthy relationships important?	The online world: How am I influenced by what I see online?	Citizenship: How can we be in control of our money?	Connecting with others: What does it mean to stand up for myself and others?	The online world: How do I feel about the things I see online?	Staying safe: How can I stay safe as I grow up?

Cycle B (2027/28 and then every other year)

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
EYFS	*Updated* Self-regulation: My feelings	Building relationships: Special relationships	Managing self: Taking on challenges	Self-regulation: Listening and following instructions	Building relationships: My family and friends	Managing self: My wellbeing
Year 1/2	My healthy self: How can we look after our emotions?	Citizenship: How can I help others and the environment?	Citizenship: How do people belong to a community and earn money?	My healthy self: How can we look after our bodies?	Growing up: How can we look after and respect our bodies as we grow?	Staying safe: How can I make safe choices in different places?
Year 3/4	My healthy self: How can I take care of my mind and body?	Citizenship: What rights and responsibilities do we have?	Health protection: How can we prevent illness and injury and respond if they happen?	My healthy self: How can I make healthy choices?	Citizenship: How can I spend money responsibly?	Growing up: How will my body and emotions change as I grow up?
Year 5/6	My healthy self: How can I support my mind and body as I grow?	Citizenship: How can we make a difference in our communities and beyond?	Growing up: How can I manage the changes to my body and emotions as I grow up?	My healthy self: How do my choices today shape my future health?	Citizenship: How can we protect everyone's rights?	Sex education: How do people become parents and carers?