Progress School

Relationships Sex and Health Education Policy



Rewritten Sept 2026 – C. Vaughan

Next review Sept 2027

Relationships Sex and Health Education Policy

At Progress School, we want every pupil to feel safe, respected, valued and prepared for life beyond school. Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an important part of helping our pupils develop the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to build healthy relationships, make safe choices and become as independent as possible.

We recognise that all children and young people grow and develop at different rates. As a specialist setting, we understand that many of our pupils need carefully planned learning, repetition, visual support and practical experiences to help them understand concepts such as friendships, emotions, personal boundaries, consent, health and safety.

Our aim is to provide a supportive, inclusive and personalised RSHE curriculum that meets the needs of every pupil while promoting dignity, respect, wellbeing and positive outcomes for adulthood.

We believe that parents and carers are children's first and most important educators. We value the knowledge families have of their children and are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers throughout a pupil's journey at Progress School.

Our RSHE curriculum is underpinned by the PSHE Association Framework for Pupils with SEND. This enables us to provide learning that is appropriately sequenced, personalised and meaningful, whilst supporting pupils to achieve their Preparation for Adulthood goals.

Though RSHE, we aim to help pupils:

- Build positive and respectful relationships.
- Develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Understand and communicate their feelings and needs.
- Recognise healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Develop an understanding of consent and personal boundaries.
- Learn how to stay safe in school, at home, in the community and online.
- Understand changes associated with growing up and puberty.
- Develop personal care and hygiene skills.
- Support their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing.
- Build independence and self-advocacy skills.
- Prepare for adulthood and future life opportunities.
- Understand their rights, responsibilities and place within society.

Statutory Framework and Parental Rights
This policy is informed by:

- DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (2025)
- PSHE Association SEND Guidance (2026)

In line with statutory guidance:

- Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory
- Parents have the right to request withdrawal from the non-statutory elements of sex education.

Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher via progressschool@aspriscs.co.uk. Following receipt of a request, the Headteacher will arrange a meeting with parents/carers to discuss the curriculum content, the reasons for the request and any concerns they may have.

Before any withdrawal is agreed:

- The Headteacher will meet with parents to discuss the request and curriculum content
- The potential impact of withdrawal on the pupil's understanding, safety, and wellbeing will be explained
- A record of discussions will be maintained

We recognise that aspects of Relationships Education, Health Education and safeguarding education, including learning about healthy relationships, personal safety, consent, online safety and recognising abuse, are statutory parts of the curriculum and pupils cannot be withdrawn from these areas.

Pupils themselves may opt into sex education from three terms before their 16th birthday, where appropriate. Those who are withdrawn will continue to receive an otherwise full PSHE/RSHE curriculum offer, outlined by the individual needs of the pupil. During periods of withdrawal from sex education, pupils will receive appropriate, purposeful education aligned to the school's PSHE and Health Education curriculum. This may include learning relating to personal safety, emotional wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, self-care, relationships, communication, independence and preparation for adulthood

Principles:

RSHE at Progress School is underpinned by the following principles:

- Teaching is individualised based on age, understanding, and need
- Learning supports personal autonomy and decision-making
- Content is adapted to reflect cognitive, communication, and sensory needs
- Pupils are taught to understand that different viewpoints exist, promoting respect
- Teaching prioritises functional, real-life knowledge

RSHE enables pupils to:

- Take increasing responsibility for their own wellbeing
- Make informed choices • Develop independence and self-awareness

RSHE Curriculum Content

Our RSHE curriculum is progressive, developmentally appropriate and carefully sequenced to enable pupils to build knowledge, skills and understanding over time. The curriculum reflects statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education requirements while being adapted to meet the needs of learners within our specialist setting.

Primary-Aged Pupils:
For primary-aged pupils, the curriculum focuses on:
• Building positive friendships and relationships
• Understanding emotions and feelings
• Respect for self and others
• Personal safety and seeking help
• Public and private behaviours
• Online safety
• Growing, changing and personal hygiene
• Developing independence and self-care skills

Secondary-Aged Pupils:
For secondary-aged pupils, learning builds on earlier knowledge and may include:
• Healthy and respectful relationships
• Consent, boundaries and personal rights
• Puberty and emotional development
• Sexual health education where appropriate
• Managing risk and peer influence
• Online relationships and digital safety
• Physical and mental health and wellbeing
• Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and the law
• Preparation for adulthood and independent living

Core Areas of Learning:

a) Self and Relationships
• Recognising self and others
• Understanding friendships and social interactions
• Respecting differences
• Recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships
• Understanding coercion and controlling behaviour

b) Safety, Boundaries and Consent
• Public vs private behaviours
• Private body parts and personal space
• Safe and unsafe touch
• Consent — giving, refusing, and withdrawing
• Identifying trusted adults

c) Emotional Understanding
• Recognising and naming emotions
• Understanding how feelings influence behaviour
• Developing regulation strategies
• Recognising emotions in others

d) Changing and Growing
• Physical changes during puberty
• Emotional changes
• Personal hygiene and self-care
• Appropriate ways to manage changes

e) Online Safety and Risk
• Understanding how online content influences behaviour
• Recognising unsafe situations online
• Awareness of exploitation, coercion, and scams
• Managing online relationships safely

f) Health and Wellbeing
• Physical health and healthy lifestyles
• Mental health and emotional wellbeing
• Personal hygiene and self-care
• Healthy eating, exercise and sleep
• Medicines and healthcare
• Understanding risk-taking behaviour
• Awareness of alcohol, tobacco, vaping and drugs
• Developing resilience and coping strategies

Sex Education (Developmentally Appropriate)
Where appropriate, pupils may learn about:
• Intimate relationships
• Consent and safety in relationships
• Respectful behaviour

This is always delivered:
• In line with pupil readiness
• With sensitivity and clarity
• With a strong focus on safeguarding

Safeguarding

RSHE plays a central role in safeguarding. Through RSHE, pupils are taught to:

• Recognise unsafe or uncomfortable situations
• Understand boundaries and personal rights
• Identify trusted adults
• Ask for help and report concerns

Some content (e.g. abuse prevention, online safety) is taught without explicit discussion of sexual activity, ensuring accessibility while maintaining safeguarding focus. All staff follow school safeguarding procedures when responding to concerns or disclosures. Staff receive safeguarding training and guidance relating to RSHE content, ensuring they can respond appropriately to disclosures, manage sensitive discussions and maintain pupil safety. Close links between safeguarding, pastoral support and the RSHE curriculum help ensure that emerging concerns are identified and addressed promptly.

Teaching Approach

RSHE is delivered using approaches that are adapted to meet the individual needs of learners:
• Visual supports (symbols, schedules, social stories)
• Clear, concrete language • Structured and predictable teaching
• Repetition and reinforcement
• Scenario-based and real-life learning

Content is delivered:
• At an appropriate developmental level
• With sensitivity to individual needs
• In a safe and supportive environment
External visitors may be used to enhance provision where appropriate, safeguarding procedures are followed at all times.

Responding to Questions

Pupils may ask questions about relationships or their bodies.
Staff will:
• Answer questions honestly and factually
• Use age-appropriate and accessible language
• Avoid unnecessary detail
• Reinforce safeguarding messages

Where appropriate, pupils will be taught correct anatomical language in a safe and respectful way.

Staff Responsibilities and Training

• The PSHE/RSHE Lead develops and regularly reviews curriculum content, ensures statutory requirements are met and quality assures the implementation of the curriculum across the school.
• Senior leaders monitor the quality and effectiveness through lesson visits, curriculum reviews, staff discussions, pupil outcomes and ongoing quality assurance activities.
• Staff delivering RSHE are supported through regular training, professional discussions and curriculum guidance led by the PSHE/RSHE Lead and senior leaders.

We ensure:
• Staff feel confident delivering sensitive content through access to training, coaching, curriculum resources and opportunities to discuss good practice. Staff confidence and training needs are reviewed through supervision, professional dialogue and quality assurance processes.
• Training is ongoing and responsive

Parental Engagement

Parents/carers are key partners. We will:
• Share information about curriculum content through policy documents, curriculum overviews and school communications
• Provide opportunities for parents/carers to discuss RSHE provision with school staff
• Offer access to relevant learning materials upon request
• Consult with parents/carers when significant curriculum changes are introduced
• Respond to questions and concerns in a timely and supportive manner

We aim for meaningful engagement, ensuring parents understand how RSHE supports safeguarding and independence.

Monitoring and Review

RSHE provision is monitored through:
• Annual curriculum review led by the PSHE/RSHE Lead
• Staff feedback and support • Pupil understanding and engagement
• Leadership monitoring and quality assurance activities, including lesson visits, work moderation and curriculum evaluation
• Parent and carer feedback

The policy will be reviewed annually by school leaders, or sooner if required by changes to statutory guidance or school practice. Consultation This policy is being shared for parental consultation. Parents/carers are invited to provide feedback via email, written response, direct discussion with school leaders . All feedback received will be considered, ensuring that our RSHE provision:
• Reflects the needs of our pupils
• Is clear and transparent
• Supports families effectively