

RSE and Health Education Policy

Date last reviewed	October 2026
Committee Responsible	SBS
Designated member of staff	Heather James
Date of next review:	September 2027

This policy should be read alongside the school's safeguarding, behaviour, inclusion, SEND, online safety, equality, anti-bullying and harmful sexual behaviour policies.

Statement of intent

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is a statutory part of the curriculum and an important element of Grey Court School's wider Personal Development provision. At Grey Court, the majority of RSHE is delivered through Personal Development and Wellbeing (PDW), complemented by learning through subjects including Science, Computing, PE, Food Technology and Year 7 Wellbeing.

Our RSHE provision is preventative, inclusive, age-appropriate and responsive. It is designed to equip students with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to develop healthy and respectful relationships, keep themselves and others safe, make informed decisions about their physical and mental health, manage risk, challenge harmful attitudes and behaviours, and know how and where to seek help.

The PDW curriculum is carefully planned and sequenced from Year 7 to Year 11, but it is not static. It may be adapted in response to student need, safeguarding and pastoral information, student voice, local or national trends, changes in technology and online behaviour, current affairs, and advice from relevant agencies. Such adaptations will remain age-appropriate, evidence-informed and consistent with statutory requirements.

The school aims to create a safe learning environment in which students can develop knowledge and ask questions without being required to disclose personal experiences. Teaching will be factual, balanced, respectful and non-judgemental.

1. Legal framework and statutory guidance

This policy has due regard to relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Equality Act 2010.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Education Act 1996 and Education Act 2002, as applicable.
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.
- Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance (revised guidance in force from 1 September 2026).
- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education (current statutory guidance).
- National Curriculum in England: Science programmes of study.
- Current UKCIS/DfE guidance relating to sharing nudes and semi-nudes and online safeguarding.

The school will keep this policy and its curriculum under review in light of changes to legislation, statutory guidance and safeguarding advice.

2. Aims

Through RSHE, Grey Court aims to ensure that students:

- develop the knowledge and vocabulary needed to understand healthy, respectful and safe relationships;
- understand consent, boundaries, respect and the law, including how these apply online as well as offline;
- recognise unhealthy, coercive, abusive, exploitative or harmful behaviour and know how to seek help;

- understand sexual and reproductive health and are able to access reliable information and support;
- develop knowledge that supports positive physical health and mental wellbeing;
- understand the risks associated with drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine and other substances;
- develop the knowledge needed to navigate online relationships, social media, pornography, image sharing, misinformation and emerging technologies safely;
- understand equality, diversity and the protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way;
- develop confidence in making informed decisions and managing risk; and
- know where and how to access support for themselves or others.

3. Roles and responsibilities

3.1 Governing board

- Ensure the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for RSHE and has an up-to-date published policy.
- Ensure RSHE is appropriately led, planned, resourced, staffed and monitored.
- Ensure provision is accessible to all students, including students with SEND.
- Ensure parents and carers receive clear information about the curriculum and the right to request withdrawal from sex education where that right applies.
- Hold leaders to account for the quality and effectiveness of RSHE provision.

3.2 Headteacher

- Have overall responsibility for implementation of this policy.
- Ensure appropriate staffing, training and resources.
- Ensure the school's approach is communicated to parents and carers.
- Consider requests for withdrawal from sex education in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Report appropriately to governors on RSHE provision.

3.3 PDW/RSHE Subject Leader

- Lead, develop and oversee the RSHE curriculum, with PDW as its principal vehicle.
- Ensure statutory content is covered and appropriately sequenced across Years 7–11.
- Work with relevant subject leaders to map curriculum coverage and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- Review and adapt provision in response to student need, safeguarding information, student voice, current issues and changes to statutory guidance.
- Create, select and quality-assure age-appropriate resources.
- Provide staff with guidance, resources, training and support.
- Monitor curriculum implementation and impact and report to senior leaders.
- Work with the DSL, SENCO, pastoral leaders and external specialists where appropriate.

3.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Advise on safeguarding-related curriculum content and emerging safeguarding themes.
- Support staff where disclosures or safeguarding concerns arise through RSHE.
- Ensure safeguarding procedures connected with RSHE are consistent with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

3.5 SENCO

- Advise on adaptations that enable students with SEND to access essential RSHE knowledge.
- Support staff in identifying where students may require more explicit teaching, additional scaffolding, repetition or alternative resources.

3.6 Staff delivering PDW/RSHE

- Deliver the agreed curriculum using school-provided or school-approved resources.
- Teach sensitively, factually and without imposing personal beliefs.
- Create a respectful environment in which students can ask questions safely.
- Make appropriate adaptations while maintaining students' entitlement to essential safeguarding knowledge.
- Follow safeguarding procedures immediately if a concern or disclosure arises.
- Seek support from the PDW Subject Leader, DSL, SENCO or pastoral staff when required.
- Signpost students to appropriate sources of support.

4. Organisation of the curriculum

The majority of RSHE is delivered through Grey Court's weekly Personal Development and Wellbeing (PDW) programme. PDW is taught across Years 7–11, primarily by form tutors, and provides the principal vehicle through which statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education is sequenced and revisited.

Some statutory content is taught or reinforced through other curriculum areas, including Science, Computing, PE, Food Technology and Year 7 Wellbeing, as well as appropriate enrichment and off-timetable provision. Curriculum mapping is used to ensure coverage, progression and appropriate links between subjects.

Detailed lesson titles and sequencing are maintained in the live PDW Curriculum Map rather than fixed within this policy. This allows the curriculum to remain current and responsive while ensuring that statutory entitlement is maintained.

5. Curriculum content

The curriculum will cover the statutory areas required by the DfE and will be organised around the following broad strands.

5.1 Families and relationships

- Different types of committed, stable relationships and family structures.
- Marriage and civil partnership, including their legal status, and the fact that forced marriage and marriage under the legal age are unlawful.
- How families and relationships may change over time, including birth, death, separation and new relationships.
- Characteristics of healthy friendships and intimate relationships, including trust, honesty, respect, kindness, boundaries and communication.
- Managing conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships respectfully.
- Parenting, responsibilities towards children and the characteristics of successful parenting.

5.2 Respect, equality and inclusion

- Respect for others, including people with different backgrounds, identities, beliefs and protected characteristics.
- The impact of stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination, sexism, misogyny, homophobia and other harmful attitudes.
- How harmful attitudes can contribute to bullying, harassment, abuse and non-consensual behaviour.
- Students' legal rights and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010.

5.3 Consent, safety and harmful behaviour

- The meaning of consent and how consent is communicated, recognised and withdrawn.
- Personal and sexual boundaries and strategies for responding to pressure.
- Sexual harassment, sexual violence, rape, domestic abuse, coercive and controlling behaviour, exploitation and grooming.
- Child-on-child abuse, including harmful behaviour within teenage relationships.
- Forced marriage, female genital mutilation and other forms of abuse required within statutory guidance.
- How to recognise unsafe situations and how to seek help for oneself or another person.

5.4 Intimate and sexual relationships and sexual health

- Characteristics of healthy intimate and sexual relationships, including mutual respect, consent, trust, communication and safety.
- That young people have choices about intimacy and can choose to delay sexual activity.
- Contraception, including the range of methods, effectiveness and access to advice.
- Pregnancy and pregnancy choices, presented through legally and medically accurate, impartial information.
- Sexually transmitted infections, transmission, risk reduction, testing, treatment and accessing confidential health advice.
- Reproductive health and fertility, including factors that may affect fertility.
- The relationship between alcohol, drugs, decision-making and sexual risk.

5.5 Online relationships, media and digital safety

- Rights, responsibilities, boundaries and respectful behaviour online.
- Cyberbullying, harassment, grooming, coercion and exploitation online.
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes, including pressure to share images, non-consensual sharing and the law.
- Image-based sexual abuse, sexual blackmail/sextortion and manipulated or AI-generated sexual imagery where age-appropriate.
- The permanence, duplication and onward sharing of online material.
- How pornography and other sexually explicit material can present distorted or unrealistic representations of bodies, relationships, consent and sexual behaviour.
- How online information is generated, targeted, manipulated and shared, including misinformation, algorithms and emerging technologies where relevant.
- How to block, report, preserve evidence where appropriate and seek support.

5.6 Mental wellbeing

- Understanding and communicating emotions.
- Factors that support positive mental wellbeing, including relationships, sleep, exercise, time outdoors, participation and connection with others.
- Recognising signs that mental wellbeing may be deteriorating and knowing how to seek help.
- Common mental health difficulties, taught in an age-appropriate and non-stigmatising way.
- Managing stress, pressure, comparison and the effects of online environments on wellbeing.

5.7 Physical health and prevention

- Healthy lifestyles, physical activity, nutrition, sleep and personal hygiene.
- Health prevention, immunisation, screening and self-examination where age-appropriate.
- Basic first aid, CPR and the purpose of defibrillators.

- Puberty, menstrual wellbeing and the changing adolescent body.
- Reliable sources of health information and how to access appropriate services.

5.8 Drugs, alcohol, tobacco, nicotine and other substances

- Facts about legal and illegal substances and associated physical and mental health risks.
- Alcohol, tobacco, vaping/nicotine and other substances relevant to young people.
- Addiction, dependency, risk, peer influence and decision-making.
- The law relating to possession and supply where appropriate.
- How and where to seek help for oneself or another person.

6. Sequencing, progression and responsive curriculum

RSHE is planned as a progressive curriculum. Knowledge and concepts are introduced at an age-appropriate point and revisited with increasing depth and complexity as students mature. Teaching builds on prior learning and seeks to correct misconceptions before students encounter greater risk.

The planned curriculum may be adapted or supplemented in response to:

- student voice and identified gaps in knowledge;
- safeguarding and pastoral information;
- patterns of behaviour or concerns within a year group;
- local community issues or public health information;
- significant national or international events;
- changes in social media, technology and online harms; and
- advice from the DSL, pastoral leaders, health professionals or other appropriate agencies.

Responsive teaching will complement rather than displace students' statutory entitlement. Significant changes will be overseen by the PDW/RSHE Subject Leader.

7. Teaching and learning

RSHE will be taught in a way that is factual, inclusive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and sensitive to students' backgrounds and needs.

- Teachers will establish clear expectations for respectful discussion.
- Students will not be required to disclose personal experiences, relationships, sexual activity, health information or other private information.
- Distancing techniques, hypothetical examples and third-person discussion will be used where appropriate.
- Students will be able to ask questions; staff will answer appropriately, factually and sensitively within the scope of the curriculum.
- Anonymous question mechanisms may be used where appropriate.
- Teachers will not promise confidentiality and will explain that information indicating a safeguarding concern must be passed on.
- Teaching will avoid victim-blaming. Responsibility for abusive, coercive, exploitative or harmful behaviour will be attributed to the person responsible for that behaviour.
- Resources will be carefully selected and will not use inappropriate, unnecessarily graphic or sensational material.

- Staff will use accurate and appropriate terminology.

8. Inclusion, equality and accessibility

Grey Court is committed to ensuring that every student can access high-quality RSHE. The curriculum and its delivery will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of protected characteristics.

Teaching will reflect the diversity of modern Britain and will include LGBT+ people and relationships in an age-appropriate, factual and integrated way rather than treating them solely as a separate topic.

Teachers will adapt language, resources, explanations and activities where necessary for students with SEND, EAL or other identified barriers. Adaptation will not mean reducing students' entitlement to essential safeguarding knowledge.

The school recognises that some students with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation, coercion, abuse or misunderstanding within relationships. Where appropriate, teaching will therefore be more explicit, carefully scaffolded, repeated and reinforced in consultation with the SENCO and relevant staff.

Where students have different developmental starting points, teaching may be adapted while remaining sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and consistent with the law.

9. Safeguarding and confidentiality

RSHE and PDW form an important part of the school's preventative safeguarding provision. Through the curriculum, students learn to recognise potentially unsafe, abusive, coercive or exploitative situations; understand their rights and responsibilities; identify trusted sources of support; and know how and when to seek help.

- All staff will follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education.
- Any safeguarding disclosure or concern arising during RSHE will be reported to the DSL or deputy without delay in accordance with school procedures.
- Students will be reminded that staff cannot guarantee confidentiality where there is a concern about safety or welfare.
- Staff will avoid investigating disclosures within the lesson and will follow safeguarding procedures.
- Students will be taught how to report concerns about themselves or another person, including concerns involving peers and online behaviour.

10. Working with parents and carers

The school recognises parents and carers as important partners in supporting children's understanding of relationships, sex and health.

- The RSHE policy will be available to parents and carers.
- Parents and carers will be provided with information about the school's approach and curriculum, including through the school's normal communication channels and the weekly e-bulletin where appropriate.

- The school will provide opportunities for parents and carers to ask questions and raise concerns.
- Parents and carers will be consulted when the school makes significant changes to its RSHE policy, in line with statutory expectations.
- Parental views will be considered, while the school retains responsibility for ensuring that statutory curriculum requirements and safeguarding responsibilities are met.

11. Student voice

Student voice is an important part of reviewing the relevance, accessibility and impact of PDW and RSHE. Feedback may be gathered through surveys, focus groups, lesson feedback, student leadership structures, assessment and pastoral information.

Student feedback may inform future curriculum planning and teaching approaches. It does not determine whether statutory content is taught.

12. Working with external agencies

External organisations and specialists may enhance RSHE by providing expertise or appropriate enrichment. Visitors will supplement, rather than replace, the school's planned curriculum.

- The school will check the suitability and credentials of external providers.
- The PDW/RSHE Subject Leader or another appropriate member of staff will agree the purpose and content of the session in advance.
- Materials will be reviewed where appropriate for age suitability, accessibility, accuracy and consistency with this policy.
- Safeguarding and confidentiality expectations will be made clear to visitors.
- An appropriate member of school staff will normally remain responsible for the class.

13. Right to request withdrawal from sex education

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some elements of sex education delivered as part of RSE, other than sex education that forms part of the National Curriculum for Science.

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

Requests should be made in writing to Ms H James (Assistant Head). Before making a decision, the delegated senior leader will discuss the request with the parent or carer and, where appropriate, the student, so that the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the reasons for the request are understood.

Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect a parent's request to withdraw a child from sex education up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. From that point, if the student wishes to receive sex education, the school will make arrangements for them to do so.

Students who are withdrawn will receive appropriate and purposeful education during the relevant lesson. Withdrawal arrangements will be recorded securely. Where a student has SEND, their individual needs will be considered as part of the discussion.

14. Assessment

Assessment in RSHE is used to establish what students know, understand and can apply, to identify misconceptions and gaps, and to inform future teaching. Students will not be assessed on personal beliefs, experiences or disclosures.

Assessment may include questioning, discussion, retrieval activities, written work, quizzes, reflection and other appropriate formative approaches. There are no formal examinations in RSHE.

15. Staff training and support

Staff delivering PDW/RSHE will be provided with appropriate resources, guidance and training to support confident and consistent delivery. Additional guidance or training will be provided where content is particularly sensitive, complex or has significant safeguarding implications.

Staff are not expected to provide specialist medical, legal or therapeutic advice beyond their professional competence. They should signpost students and seek support from the PDW/RSHE Subject Leader, DSL, pastoral team, SENCO or appropriate specialist services when necessary.

16. Monitoring quality and impact

The PDW/RSHE Subject Leader is responsible for monitoring the quality, consistency and impact of RSHE. Quality assurance will be proportionate and may include:

- curriculum reviews and statutory-content audits;
- learning visits or other appropriate quality-assurance activity;
- student voice;
- staff feedback;
- review of student work and formative assessment;
- pastoral and safeguarding information, where appropriate and handled confidentially; and
- review of curriculum accessibility and adaptations.

Findings will be used to identify strengths, areas for development, staff training needs and appropriate curriculum adaptations.

17. Curriculum links

RSHE is primarily delivered through PDW but is supported and reinforced across the wider curriculum. Relevant links may include Science, Computing, PE, Food Technology, Year 7 Wellbeing, safeguarding education, enrichment and appropriate off-timetable activities. Subject leaders will work together where necessary to ensure coherent coverage and avoid unnecessary duplication.

18. Support and signposting

Students will be regularly reminded where and how to access support within and outside school.

Signposting will be appropriate to the topic and may include trusted adults in school, the pastoral and safeguarding teams, health professionals, local services and reputable national specialist organisations.

Signposting information will be reviewed regularly so that students are directed to current and reliable sources of support.

19. Monitoring and review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually by the Headteacher and PDW/RSHE Subject Leader, and earlier where there are significant changes to statutory guidance, legislation, safeguarding expectations or school provision.

Significant changes will be communicated to relevant staff, governors, parents/carers and students as appropriate. The detailed PDW Curriculum Map may be updated more frequently than this policy in order to remain responsive to student need while maintaining statutory coverage.

20. Linked policies and documents

This policy should be read alongside the school's current:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Behaviour/Relationships Policy;
- Inclusion Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Equality/Equalities Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Harmful Sexual Behaviour Policy;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing/SEMH Policy;
- Drug Education Policy;
- Student Confidentiality and Records Management policies, where applicable;
- Acceptable Use/Terms of Use arrangements; and
- PDW Curriculum Map.

Key national guidance includes:

- Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance, revised guidance in force from 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- UK Council for Internet Safety / Department for Education guidance on sharing nudes and semi-nudes.