



Exeter Junior School Relationships and Health Education Policy

Status:	Approved
Approver:	Governors
Last review date:	May 2026
SRO:	SAVS
Next review date:	May 2027



1. Introduction and Aims

The purpose of the policy is to outline how through our Relationships and Health Education provision we aim to support our pupils' social, moral, cultural and emotional development. Our focus is on developing our pupils' knowledge about health, relationships, emotional and mental wellbeing to support them to make the best possible decisions as they grow and change. We place the emphasis upon relationships, supporting pupils' understanding and skill in developing positive and healthy relationships.

The aim of Relationships and Health Education at Exeter Junior School is to help pupils develop self-respect, confidence and empathy. Pupils will learn about what makes healthy relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in a way that is age appropriate and sensitive to their faith. This will include online relationships, and how to seek help if they feel unsafe. Teaching will respect the diversity of families in our community. These aims complement those of the science curriculum in KS2. Relationships and Health Education is not about sexual relationships (though any questions which may arise will be addressed in an age-appropriate manner.) Relationships and Health Education also creates an opportunity to enable pupils to be taught about positive emotional and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing

This policy has been produced and is reviewed in consultation with parents, teachers and pupils and seeks to take into account the views of the school community. It is reviewed annually in collaboration with the Head and the Head of PSHE along with the Deputy Head, Enrichment Character and Community. Any significant changes made will be shared with the Education Committee and communicated to the parents.

2. Statutory requirements

As a primary school we must provide Relationships and Health Education to all pupils as per section 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

We are not required to provide sex education; however, in line with government guidelines, parents will not be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships and Health Education or health education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty) and we do need to teach the elements of human reproduction through the statutory science curriculum.

Our school's policy on Relationships and Health Education is based on the statutory guidance published by the Department for Education (DfE). The current statutory guidance - originally published in 2019 under the Education Act 2002 - has since been updated in July 2025; the revised guidance will take effect from 1 September 2026. These changes are now implemented in this policy in line with the statutory requirements. Other documents that inform the school's Relationships and Health Education policy include:

- Equality Act (2010)
- KCSIE (2026)
- Child Protection (Safeguarding Policy)
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy.

Should you like to see the guidance and statutory requirements for relationships health in Primary Schools from the government please visit: [LINK](#)



3. Definition

The Department for Education defines Relationships and Health Education as, “teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with reference to friendships, family relationships and relationships with other peers and adults.” Relationships and Health Education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, healthy lifestyles, diversity, staying safe and personal identity. Relationships and Health Education involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. The focus for primary Relationships and Health Education should be on teaching the skills and knowledge that form the building blocks of all positive relationships, supporting children from the start of their education to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe.

4. Delivery of RHE

The content of the RHE curriculum is delivered through the curriculum areas of PSHE and science is also delivered in the following ways:

- timetabled lessons. The school will ensure sufficient and regular time is allocated within the curriculum to deliver the RHE curriculum effectively, and in a manner designed to facilitate meaningful discussion, whereby ground rules are clearly outlined and followed
- assemblies delivered by members of staff and / or external agencies
- collapsed timetable sessions delivered by members of staff and / or external agencies.

The curriculum content is delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way which allows scope for pupils to ask questions.

5. The Relationship and Health Education Curriculum

We teach Relationships and Health Education through our PSHE curriculum and where appropriate through our science curriculum. In PSHE we use OneDecision, which is assured through the PSHE Association to build our curriculum, supported by other published resources and teacher/designed materials.

We cover;

- Families, how they are all different and all are to be valued;
- Positive relationships and friendships;
- Respecting ourselves and others - exploring how our behaviour can impact on others; challenging stereotypes and promote positive behaviour.
- Online safety and digital life and online wellbeing. This includes teaching pupils about respectful relationships and personal boundaries, the safe sharing of information and personal images/data, and digital wellbeing, including awareness of online scams and phishing.
- In relation to mental health and emotional wellbeing, we address topics such as change and loss, including bereavement, loneliness and coping with change. These themes are integrated into our *One Decision* programme and are also supported through our wellbeing box for pupils to share concerns, our pastoral hub, and the everyday life and culture of the school.
- Appropriate relationships, how bodies belong to the individual, how identify appropriate physical contact, and where to go if they feel unsafe.
- How males and females are different and scientifically correct names for body parts; When teaching these lessons, through our puberty topic or within the science curriculum, we ensure that accurate vocabulary is used and that pupils are taught to understand and use this terminology appropriately.
- How bodies grow and change and what happens to bodies during puberty.



We aim to support children's emotional development, and the children are encouraged to ask questions and are taught where to go if help is needed.

The sex education strand will be covered through our science curriculum as set out in the National Curriculum; teachers inform children about males and females and how a baby is born. In Key Stage 2, we teach about life processes including reproduction in some plants and animals and the main stages of the human life cycle. All pupils will learn about the changes experienced in puberty. The Relationships and Health Education will be inclusive, helping pupils to understand important issues. In accordance with the 2024 government guidance, puberty will not be taught before year 4 (Upper One) whilst sex education will not be taught before year 5 (Lower Two), in line with what pupils learn about conception and birth as part of the national curriculum in science.

In Key Stage 2 (years 3 - 6), we acknowledge that many children will begin to experience puberty at this age. We teach the children about the parts of the body and how they work. We also explain what will happen to their bodies during puberty. We encourage the children to ask for help if they need it and there are opportunities for single-gender question sessions. The curriculum content is delivered in a non-judgemental factual way which allows scope for young people to ask questions, whether publicly or anonymously, e.g. through using the class "Ask It Basket." By the end of Key Stage 2, we ensure that both boys and girls know how babies are born, how their bodies change during puberty, and what menstruation is and how it affects women. We always teach this with due regard for the emotional development of the children. These sessions are supported by our School Nurse.

Relationships and Health Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online relationships and awareness and online wellbeing
- Being safe

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers). Pupils with special educational needs will be given the opportunity to fully participate in Relationships and Health Education lessons, and a differentiated programme will be offered if required.

We carry out the main Relationships Health Education curriculum in PSHE lessons, however we also teach Relationships and Health Education through other subject areas e.g. science, PE and RE, where we feel that they contribute significantly to a child's knowledge and understanding of his or her own body, and how it is changing and developing. Linked with RE, children reflect on family relationships, different family groups and friendship. They learn about rituals and traditions associated with birth, marriage and death and talk about the emotions involved. Linked with PE, children learn about healthy lifestyles and the importance of exercise and hygiene.



6. Assessment and pupil progress

Teachers are expected to plan, teach and assess the subject and, measure pupil progress in accordance with the high expectations across the school in other subject areas. This will be regularly monitored and reviewed by Head of PSHE and regularly reported to JSLT and Governors.

7. Alignment with the Pre-Prep School

Exeter Junior School policy is designed to work in close alignment with Exeter Pre-Prep School's policy. While each phase of the school has its own age-appropriate strategies and expectations, both policies are rooted in the same organisational ethos of respect, kindness, and positive community.

We maintain close communication between leadership teams to ensure consistency of approach, particularly in the areas of pastoral care, behaviour expectations, and family engagement. This alignment helps to provide pupils with a clear and supportive journey as they transition from Pre-Prep into the Junior School, reinforcing shared values and building upon the strong foundations established in the early years.

8. Roles and responsibilities

a) The governing body

The Governors will approve the Relationships and Health Education policy and hold the Head of the Junior School to account for its implementation.

b) The Head

The Head is responsible for ensuring that Relationships and Health Education is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of Relationships and Health Education. The Head also:

- Ensures that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.
- Monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors on the effectiveness of the policy

c) Teachers

All staff are responsible for:

- Delivering Relationships and Health Education in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to Relationships and Health Education
- Monitoring progress - through drop ins, observations, and pupils' voice. Pupils' development in Relationships and Health Education is monitored by class teachers.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of Relationships and Health Education

Form tutors are responsible for teaching Relationships and Health Education through their PSHE lessons with the help of our school nurse who also provides valuable input and guidance.

Teachers will reply to, and answer, children's questions sensitively and openly. They will ensure that balanced information is provided which will take into account the different faiths' views and avoid any negative impressions.



d) Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in Relationships and Health Education and, when discussing issues related to relationship education, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Relationships and Health Education will be accessible for all pupils, including those with SEND and other vulnerabilities, and to ensure teaching will be differentiated and personalised. The school is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and will take this into consideration when designing and teaching these subjects.

e) Parents

The school understands the primary role in children's Relationships and Health Education lies with parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children at our school through mutual understanding, trust, and transparency. The school will:

- Inform parents about the school's Relationships and Health Education policy and practice; this includes informing parents by letter or email before beginning to teach a unit/lesson of Relationships and Health Education
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the relationship's education of their child; this includes providing opportunities for parents to view the resources that are used in lessons
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for Relationships and Health Education in the school
- A register of any pupils who are removed from lessons will be kept and distributed to all teachers involved. All pupils who are withdrawn will receive a purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

f) Visitors

"Visitors should complement but never substitute or replace planned provision. It is the PSHE subject leader and teacher's responsibility to plan the curriculum and lessons." Sex and Relationship Guidance" DfEE 0116/2000 P 29 6.11

Visitors to Exeter School, such as parents/carers, health professionals and members of voluntary organisations, may be invited to plan and contribute to Relationships and Health Education lessons. They will be given a copy of this policy and will be expected to work within the values framework described within. The Head of PSHE will ensure that the visitors' contributions to lessons are in line with the learning outcomes of the schools' Relationships and Health Education programme. A teacher will be present during the lesson.

9. Parents/carers right to withdraw

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.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within relationships health education.

The science curriculum also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Head.



Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education and that child will go to another class for the duration of the lesson.

10. Equality

Schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149), when teaching Relationships and Health Education Schools must ensure topics in Relationships and Health Education are taught in a way which does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment. Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect and protected characteristics, in an age-appropriate way.

11. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Teachers conduct Relationships and Health Education lessons in a sensitive manner. If the teacher has concerns, they will draw these to the attention of the designated person responsible for child protection (DSL).

Legally, the school cannot offer or guarantee absolute confidentiality. We aim to ensure that pupils' best interests are maintained and try to encourage pupils to talk to their parents or carers to provide support. If confidentiality must be broken, pupils are informed first and then supported by the designated teacher throughout the whole process.

The school will follow *Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE)* and will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including about how to stay safe online and respectful relationships. Appropriate open forums to discuss potentially sensitive issues will be made available to children. Children will also be made aware of how to raise concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. The school recognises that a one size fits all approach may not be appropriate for all children, and a more personalised or contextualised approach for more vulnerable children, victims of abuse and some SEND children might be needed or to respond to the incidents or any patterns identified by the school, for example in particular cohorts.

Teachers will follow the school's policy on confidentiality between themselves and pupils and manage an appropriate level of confidentiality. Pupils should be reassured that their best interests will be maintained, but teachers cannot offer or promise absolute confidentiality. Teachers will follow the school's safeguarding policy if a child protection issue is raised.

In addition, but not alternatively to following the school's safeguarding policy, teachers will also consider whether any anti-bullying and / or disciplinary issues arise following any pupil concerns and will follow the school's behavioural management policy and / or the school's anti-bullying policy as appropriate.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of Relationships and Health Education will be monitored by the Head of PSHE, through drop-ins, observations and pupil voice. It will be reviewed and evaluated regularly by the Head and Head of PSHE. All schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to assess the content and that the content as defined



within the policy is accurate and conforms to current guidance. Any review of the programme includes an opportunity for the views of teachers and pupils to be considered.

13.Publication and availability

This policy is published on the school's website. This policy is available from the junior school office as a hard copy on request and can be made available in large print or another accessible format if required.