# Relationship and Sex Education policy (including EYFS)

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**June 2025**
**Approved by SMT June 2025**

*To be read in conjuction with :*

- *Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy*
- *PSHCE Policy*
- *Transgender and Gender Questioning Policy*

Hurst takes its responsibility to provide relevant, effective and responsible relationship and sex education (RSE) to all of its pupils as part of the school's PSHCE curriculum very seriously. The school wants parents and pupils to feel assured that RSE will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of pupils, and safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the RSE provision.

This policy is drafted by *the Head of PSHCE Rec – Year 6 and the Head of PSHCE for Senior Prep and Senior Schools.* The policy is reviewed and approved by the governing body annually and is available in the Staff Handbook which is available online to all staff and parents.

## 1. Policy aims

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about teaching relationships, sex, sexuality and sexual health in a way that is fully understood and effectively retained by pupils in our care. It is about teaching what it is to be in a caring, stable and mutually supportive relationship with another person, and how to control and understand feelings that come with being in a relationship. RSE will outline the importance of family life and the raising of children, as well as highlighting the role of marriage and other stable relationships as building blocks for community and society.

The school would like to emphasise that by providing comprehensive RSE we are not encouraging pupils to become sexually active at a young age. The aim of this policy is to ensure that the right provision is in place so that pupils may have all the background knowledge they need to make informed decisions, safe and responsible choices as they grow up as well as how to navigate difficult and potentially harmful situations.

Through the provision outlined in this policy we also aim to raise pupils' self esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media. We hope to teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender differences, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them. We want our pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teach them to care for and respect their bodies and provide them with all the right tools that will enable them to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their school years and after. Schemes of Work reflect the statutory changes to RSE made in 2021.

## 2. Roles and responsibilities

**Governors and senior leaders will:**

- Develop this school policy with reference to RSE recommendations and review it on a yearly basis.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are given training on issues relating to RSE and how to deliver lessons on such issues.
- Ensure that all relevant staff are up to date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to RSE.
- Provide support to staff members to enable them to feel confident to deal with the delivery of RSE to pupils.

- Ensure that RSE is age-relevant and appropriate across all year groups; this means ensuring that the curriculum develops as our pupils do and meets their needs.
- Ensure that the knowledge and information regarding RSE to which all pupils are entitled is provided in a comprehensive and impartial way.
- Communicate with staff, parents and the governing body to ensure that everyone is in understanding of the school policy and curriculum for RSE, and that any concerns or opinions regarding the provision at the school are listened to, taken into account and acted on as appropriate.
- A school governor is given oversight of PSHCE as one of their curriculum areas.

**Relevant staff will:**

- Take it upon themselves to ensure that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE. Any areas that they feel are not covered or inadequately provided for should be reported back to their Head of Department.
- Attend and engage in professional development training around RSE provision.
- Encourage pupils to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously. If a safeguarding concern is raised as a result of an RSE lesson, the safeguarding policy will be followed to pass the concern on to the safeguarding team. No one else should be informed at this stage, and a breach of confidentiality may fall under staff misconduct and disciplinary procedures. Once the risk has been assessed by the safeguarding team, it may be that wellbeing support is provided to the child or member of staff. Provide regular feedback to their Head of Department on their experience of teaching RSE and pupil response.
- Ensure that their personal beliefs and attitudes will not prevent them from providing balanced RSE in school.
- Tailor their lessons to suit all pupils in their class, across the whole range of abilities, including those pupils with special educational needs.

### Pupils

Pupils are expected to attend RSE classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects pupils to recognise this.

Pupils should support one another with issues that arise through RSE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision.

We also hope that pupils will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to RSE or otherwise. Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils will be held in confidence; however, staff may take concerns to the DSL if there is a child protection concern or they feel ill-equipped to deal with the issue at hand.

We ask pupils for feedback on the school's RSE provision and expect them to take this responsibility seriously. Opinions on provision and comments will be reviewed by Heads of Department and taken into consideration when the curriculum is prepared for the following year's pupils. In this way, the school hopes to provide pupils with the education they need on topics they want to learn about.

### Parents

The school hopes parents will share the responsibility of RSE and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. The curriculum booklet outlines topics and themes for individual year groups and parents are notified when visiting speakers and staff deliver key talks to pupils. Where appropriate, parents will also be invited to listen to visiting speakers and presentations, with opportunities to share questions and resources.

## Implementation and curriculum

It is important that we implement our RSE policy consistently throughout the school, and provide effective provision throughout classrooms. We encourage teachers to provide classes that are specific to the needs of the pupils in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development.

Through this aspect of our curriculum we aim to explore different attitudes, values and social labels, and develop skills that will enable our pupils to make informed decisions regarding relationships and sex. It is important that pupils know the difference between fact, opinion and belief.

Healthy relationships in many different forms, are taught throughout a child's education at Hurst College and staff will take opportunities to reinforce these important messages on a daily basis.

| **School Year/s** | **RSE Content – This is designed as a 'spiral approach' where the same topics are revisited with age-appropriate terminology and resources.** |
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| Reception to Year 2<br><br>Taught by Tutor | • Correct names for male and female parts of the body<br>• Identify physical similarities and differences between boys and girls<br>• Healthy and Unhealthy friendships and Boundaries<br>• NSPCC 'TalkPANTS' |
| Years 3 and 4<br><br>Taught by Tutor | • Healthy and Unhealthy relationships<br>• Personal space and appropriate touch<br>• Consent within friendships and families<br>• Different families<br>• Changing Bodies (end of Year 4) |
| Year 5<br><br>Taught by Tutor | • An introduction to puberty in conjunction with the science curriculum<br>• Changing Adolescent body<br>• Healthy and Unhealthy relationships<br>• Consent within friendships and families (Including visiting speaker)<br>• Relationship with self, and health and prevention |
| Year 6<br><br>Taught by Tutor | • Puberty, growth and change<br>• Healthy and Unhealthy relationships<br>• Consent within friendships and families (including visiting speaker)<br>• Relationship with self, and health and prevention<br>• Social Media and Digital Wellbeing |
| Year 7<br><br>Taught by Tutor | Lessons on:<br><br>• Dealing with change<br>• Changing Friendships<br>• Building Connections<br>• Healthy online friendships<br>• Hurtful Behaviour<br>• Introduction to Consent<br>• Puberty and Emotional Wellbeing<br>• Menstrual Wellness<br><br>Visiting speaker from It Happens on:<br><br>• The Adolescent Body: Puberty:<br>  ○ Puberty & change - when, why & what happens?<br>  ○ Male puberty explained<br>  ○ Period products, the environment & menstrual wellbeing<br>  ○ Feelings & sensation |

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| | ○ Emotions, empathy & respect for each other<br>○ Know yourself & ask for help<br><br>Visiting speaker also addresses parents to share the content of her pupil talk. |
| Year 8<br><br>Taught by Tutor | Completing and adapted version of the PSHE Associations scheme on 'Belonging and Community'. Lessons cover:<br><br>• Identity and Community<br>• Bias and Stereotypes<br>• Discrimination and Protected Characteristics<br>• Values and Constructive Disagreements<br>• Diverse and Supportive Communities<br><br>Talk from It Happens on: Early Digital Relationships –<br><br>○ My digital self, consent & friendships<br>○ Sharing images & risk<br>○ Victim blaming & shame<br>○ Stumbling into unsafe places online<br>○ What is real online?<br>○ Helpful habits & disrupting your feed |
| Shell<br><br>Taught by PSHCE teachers | Completing and adapted version of the NSPCC 'Talk Relationships'. Lessons cover:<br><br>• Transition to senior school (changing relationships)<br>• Healthy Relationships<br>• Stereotypes and the media<br>• Safer Online Relationships<br>• Harmful Sexual Behaviour (focus on sexual harassment)<br>• Consent and Sexual Health Education<br>• Sharing Nudes<br>• Positive communication and Ending Relationships<br><br>Talk from It Happens on: Developing Bodies Yr9<br><br>○ The adolescent brain & body - a recap<br>○ Products; how to access, choose & use them<br>○ Periods & sport<br>○ Brands, masculinity & hair removal<br>○ Pre-sexual genital health (thrush, UTIs, HPV)<br>○ Your emotional self & big feelings |
| Remove<br><br>Taught by PSHCE teachers | Completing and adapted version of the NSPCC 'Talk Relationships'. Lessons cover:<br><br>• Rights and Values in Relationships<br>• Communication and Readiness<br>• Unhealthy Relationships<br>• Pornography<br>• Sex Education<br>• Gendered Violence |

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| | Talk from It Happens on: Intimate Relationships<br><br>o The journey of a relationship<br>o Where do we get good answers from?<br>o Understanding intimacy (reality v pornography)<br>o Choice, Freedom & Capacity<br>o Complex consent, communication & connection<br>o Green Flags/Red Flags & being upstanding<br><br>Talk from It Happens on: Developing Digital Lives<br><br>o Digital lives & human relationships<br>o Are you true to yourself online?<br>o Influencers/deepfakes/manipulation & algorithms<br>o Pornography & neurological reward systems<br>o What is the script for a healthy sexual relationship?<br>o Intervening & reporting if you are worried |
| Fifth Form | Scenario based discussions in tutor groups evaluating prevention, risk and actions.<br><br>Talk from It Happens: Keeping your body safe and sexual health:<br><br>o Sexual wellbeing & pleasure<br>o Inclusive sexual health<br>o Sexually transmitted infections (STIs)<br>o Barrier methods<br>o HIV & Aids, PrEP & PEP<br>o Accessing services and getting tested<br><br>They will also receive a talk on Keeping Safe at Festivals from It Happens. |
| Sixth Form | • Variety of visiting speakers on topics including;<br>o Diversity and Inclusion<br>o Relationships with Self and Mental Health<br>o Life Lessons<br>o Consent and Healthy Relationships<br>• Sexual Health clinics offered by Medical Centre twice a year<br>• Scenario based discussions in tutor groups evaluating prevention, risk and actions.<br><br>Talk from It Happens on Intimate Relationships – Yr12 &13<br><br>o The journey of a relationship<br>o Where do we get good answers from?<br>o Understanding intimacy (reality v pornography)<br>o Choice, Freedom & Capacity<br>o Complex consent, communication & connection<br>o Green Flags/Red Flags & being upstanding<br><br>They will also receive a talk on Spiking from It Happens. |

## Guest speakers

As shown in the table above we do invite guest speakers into school to talk on issues related to relationships and sex. It may be the case that the subject under discussion is better coming from an expert or experienced health professional who can challenge pupil's perceptions. Tutors will be present throughout these talks so they are able to deal with any arising issues.

## Terminology

Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts, but slang or everyday terms used in certain social circles will be discussed; this will surround discussion about what is and isn't acceptable language to use.

## Dealing with difficult questions

There may be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from their Head of Department.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- an anonymous question box; this will enable pupils to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified
- Class rules, covering respect, confidentiality and aiming for depersonalisation of content and scenarios.

making the classroom a zone of silence; this means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be brought up at any other time. We hope this will give pupils the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about sex and relationships, should they choose to

## Pupils with special educational needs

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. Staff should differentiate lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully, and this is no different when it comes to RSE.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information.

- interactive teaching methods
- use of expert guest speakers
- practical activities
- using video clips
- group and paired activities.

## Withdrawal from RSE

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum. Parents can request access to resources and information being used in class, and the school will do everything it can to ensure that parents are comfortable with the education provided to their children in school.

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance states that, from September 2020, all schools must deliver relationships education (in primary schools) and relationships and sex education (in secondary schools). The parental right to withdraw pupils from RSE remains in primary and secondary education, for aspects of sex education which are not part of the Science curriculum. This excludes withdrawal from the elements on

human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum Science. Withdrawal does not apply to 'Relationships' lessons, only the few 'Sex Education' lessons.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from RSE should contact the *Deputy Head Pastoral* who will arrange a meeting to discuss their concerns. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before withdrawing their child from this aspect of school life. However, it is acknowledged that the final decision on the issue is for the parent to take.

### Complaints

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSE curriculum should contact the school and follow the school's complaints policy.

## Equal opportunities

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to gender, sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the school's behaviour policy which can also be found in the staff handbook.

## Safeguarding and confidentiality

We strive to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the school's **child protection and safeguarding procedure** should be followed. This can be found in the staff handbook.

Personal information about pupils who have approached a teacher for discussion should not be shared with any other person. It is important to note that sexual orientation and gender identity are not safeguarding issues so if a young person confides in their teacher about either of these, there is no obligation to pass the information on. If there is a child protection concern, the information must only be shared with the DSL as is outlined in the school child protection and safeguarding procedure. Staff members that breach the right to a child's privacy by disclosing or sharing confidential information with no reason to do so will be dealt with under the school's **staff discipline, conduct and grievance procedures**. These can also be found in the staff handbook.

If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or overtly discussing having sexual intercourse, the teacher should report this to the DSL.

## Advice and treatment

The medical centre is available for pupils to ask advice and questions about safe sex, risk of pregnancy and STIs and staff will sign post pupils to seek this guidance from the medical centre, when required. STI testing is available to be ordered online from West Sussex 'Your Space' (Sexually transmitted infections - West Sussex County Council). Staff who are approached by pupils with a concern about having contracted or possibly contracted a sexually transmitted disease or who may be pregnant, has a duty to refer them to ***the medical centre and the DSL.*** Providing advice on contraception and practising safe sex is a key part of the school's RSE provision.

There is no reason for staff to expect to be made aware of a pupil or colleague's HIV or hepatitis status, and no person will be discriminated against because of this if there is a disclosure of this type of information.

The school's **first aid policy** covers protection for all school members against infection from blood-borne viruses.

## 3. Monitoring, review and evaluation

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the RSE curriculum annually.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our RSE provision through:

- feedback from pupils (via meetings, questionnaires, and informal 1:1 verbal feedback)
- assessment of pupil understanding via tasks within the schemes of work
- feedback from parents (via email communication and questionnaires)
- feedback from staff
- observations within the classroom

## 4. Support

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to RSE. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.