

# MARISH

## ACADEMY TRUST



# Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

**Approved by:** Strategic Board

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## National Context

In 2026, the Department for Education updated statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education. This policy reflects those requirements and ensures that the ethos of Marish Academy Trust underpins all teaching and learning.

Key points:

- Relationships are the core focus, with age-appropriate teaching on health, wellbeing, and personal development.
- Teaching is embedded within the wider PSHE curriculum to promote emotional, social, and moral growth.
- Pupils are prepared for modern British life, including resilience, healthy relationships, online safety, and personal responsibility.
- Primary schools are not required to deliver formal RSE lessons, but Marish Academy Trust includes statutory Science content alongside broader PSHE elements.
- We follow the Education Act 1996, Children and Social Work Act 2017, and updated statutory guidance, developed in consultation with parents, staff, and governors.

The world has changed significantly since the previous RSE guidance (2000). With the growth of technology and online exposure, children face risks relating to relationships, sexual behaviour, and wellbeing. This policy ensures children are supported in making safe, informed, and responsible choices.

## 2. Aims

The aims of RSE and PSHE at Marish Academy Trust is ultimately to ensure that children have a clear understanding on what healthy relationships are. The Trust seeks to ensure that we:

- Provide a safe framework for sensitive discussions and personal reflection because pupils should feel respected and supported.
- Prepare pupils for puberty, physical and emotional changes, and the importance of health and hygiene, including understanding body development and wellbeing.
- Support pupils' self-respect, confidence, and empathy to help them build positive relationships with others.
- Promote a positive culture around respectful and healthy relationships, including understanding consent, courtesy, manners, and respect for differences.
- Teach correct vocabulary for body parts and relationships, supporting clear communication and safety.
- Develop interpersonal and communication skills so pupils can form and maintain healthy friendships and positive relationships.

- Encourage values and moral frameworks for decision-making, including personal responsibility and honesty.
- Develop understanding of marriage, stable relationships, and family life, including recognising diverse family structures.
- Promote loving, respectful, and kind relationships, with an emphasis on positive friendship and peer dynamics.
- Foster understanding of the benefits of delaying sexual activity in an age-appropriate way.
- Equip pupils with knowledge and skills to maintain health and wellbeing.
- Recognise and avoid exploitative relationships, unnecessary risks, and unsafe situations.
- Develop skills for effective communication, negotiation, and conflict resolution in relationships.
- Develop the skills needed to successfully and safely become 'digital citizens' with an awareness of the benefits as well as the harms of evolving technology.
- Encourage pupils to access appropriate support and advice when needed.
- Support pupils' resilience, self-worth, and emotional intelligence, helping them succeed in modern Britain now and in the future.

### 3. Introduction and Definitions

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is part of the wider agenda of promoting positive relationships, wellbeing, and health.

Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) complements RSE by covering topics such as emotional health, social skills, citizenship, and safety.

#### Key Principles

- RSE and PSHE are central to school ethos and values.
- They form part of lifelong learning about emotions, relationships, sexual health, and responsibilities.
- Learning occurs across home, school, and community settings.
- Entitlement for all children, with differentiation for learning needs, family circumstances, culture, religion, and gender.
- Effective when linked to social and emotional development, information sharing, skill-building, and values exploration.
- Responsive to the specific needs of children and young people.

RSHE is not about promoting sexual activity, but about providing accurate information, supporting healthy choices, and developing emotional intelligence and resilience. It seeks to equip pupils to communicate respectfully within healthy relationships.

### National & Local Framework

- RE/RSE guidance 2026
- National Curriculum 2014
- Every Child Matters
- Inclusion strategies
- National Healthy School Status
- Looked After Children policies
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Slough Children and Young People's Plan

## 4. Policy Development

The policy was developed through a consultation process with multiple stakeholders:

1. Review: Executive Leadership reviewed relevant national and local guidance.
2. Staff consultation: All staff reviewed and made recommendations.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation: A group of parents read and provided feedback.
4. Pupil consultation: Pupils provided input on when, how, and where RSHE should be delivered.
5. Ratification: Policy shared with governors and formally ratified.

## 5. Implementing the RSHE Policy

### Trust Values Context

- Promote a healthy, safe, and caring environment.
- Deliver a broad, balanced curriculum considering gender, culture, and ability.
- Support self-esteem, emotional wellbeing, and respectful relationships.
- Prepare pupils for secondary school and adulthood.
- Provide information and support for safe choices.
- Enriched curriculum develops life management, resilience, and wellbeing.
- Promote respect for diversity, moral, and religious values.

### Delivering the Entitlement Curriculum

- Delivered continuously across PSHE lessons, circle time, focused events, R-Time, assemblies.
- Embedded across Science, English, RE, PE.

- Embedded within key elements of our online safety education such as through Computing units, PSHE lessons, R-Time and other E-Safety initiatives (i.e. workshops and assemblies)
- Supported by enrichment activities such as school nurse visits, social skills groups, and school trips.
- Methods include single-sex groups or small group teaching for sensitive topics.

### Responsibilities

- Shared responsibility for responding to pupil questions and needs.
- Primarily delivered by class teachers in Years 5.
- PSHE Lead and SLT support planning, methodology, assessment, and monitoring.
- Executive Headteacher ensures consistency and manages withdrawal requests.
- Governors hold policy responsibility and oversee implementation.

### Teaching Methodologies

#### Ground Rules:

- Safe, non-judgmental environment
- Appropriate use of language
- Clear guidance on asking/answering personal questions
- Strategies for checking information

#### Answering Questions:

- Guided discussion, reflecting policy aims
- Sensitive topics handled individually or in small groups
- Personal revelations discouraged
- Concerns of abuse referred to Designated Child Protection Lead

#### Family Context:

- Inclusive of all family structures (single parent, LGBT, foster, adoptive, extended families)
- Sensitive to children with different support structures (looked after children, young carers)

### Inclusion

- Consider gender, culture, learning needs, maturity, and background
- Respect diversity of beliefs and lifestyles

- Special educational needs: clear support for safety, self-esteem, and access to resources

#### Resources

- PSHE and Jigsaw schemes
- Evaluated for accuracy, bias-free content, age appropriateness
- Selected resources: align with entitlement curriculum, engaging, inclusive, up-to-date
- SACRE curriculum
- National Curriculum for Science

#### Use of Visitors

- Complement, never replace teaching
- DBS-checked and accompanied by staff
- Pre-approved resources
- Contributions monitored for consistency

#### Confidentiality

- Absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed
- Staff act in best interests; share information only if child at risk
- Pupils informed if information is shared

#### Child Protection

- RSHE may prompt disclosures
- Staff report immediately to Designated Child Protection Lead
- Procedures consistent with safeguarding policy

#### Sexually Active Children

- Extremely rare in primary schools
- Treated as child protection issue, involving parents and relevant agencies

#### Staff Training

- Training for confidence, awareness, and effective delivery
- INSET, external advisors, networking with other schools
- Sharing best practice encouraged

## 6. Role of Governors

- Approve RSHE policy

- Hold Executive Headteacher accountable
- Oversee withdrawal requests

## 7. Parents' Right to Withdraw

- Cannot withdraw from statutory Science or Health Education
- Can withdraw from non-statutory Sex Education
- Requests in writing; alternative work provided
- Executive Headteacher negotiates individually

### Summary Table:

Subject/Topic	Compulsory?	Withdrawal Allowed?
<b>Health Education</b>	Yes	No
<b>Relationship Education</b>	Yes	No
<b>SRE via Science</b>	Yes	No
<b>Sex Education</b>	No	Yes

## 8. Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
<b>1.0</b>	18/01/2012	HT	Initial
<b>2.0</b>	22/02/2014	Exec HT	Review
<b>3.0</b>	Jan 2016	Exec HT	Update
<b>4.0</b>	Jan 2018	Exec HT	Update
<b>5.0</b>	Feb 2020	Exec HT	RSE statutory
<b>6.0</b>	Mar 2022	Exec HT	Combined with PSHE
<b>7.0</b>	Mar 2024	Exec HT	Current

## 9. Approval History

Version	Approved	Comments
<b>1.0</b>	18/01/2012	

2.0	10/03/2013	
3.0	Feb 2016	
4.0	Feb 2018	
5.0	Mar 2020	
6.0	Apr 2022	

## Appendix 1: Sensitive Issues

- **Puberty:** Years 5; single-sex sessions; sanitary products available
- **Contraception:** Not formally taught; answered factually
- **Abortion:** Respond to questions factually and sensitively
- **STIs/HIV/AIDS:** Prepare groundwork through RSE and Science
- **Sexual Identity & Orientation:** Challenge prejudice, promote diversity, uphold British Values

## Appendix 2: Entitlement Curriculum (RSE & PSHE)

### Foundation & KS1 (3-7 years):

- Self-care, hygiene, body awareness
- Friendships, empathy, sharing
- Families, similarities/differences, personal safety

### KS2 (7-11 years):

- Human life cycle, growth, reproduction
- Puberty, hygiene, healthy lifestyle
- Relationships, communication, consent
- Respect, diversity, trust, managing risk
- Emotional literacy, assertiveness, safeguarding

*(All objectives linked to Jigsaw PSHE lesson plans and statutory requirements.)*