



ORCHARD HOUSE
SCHOOL

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE) & Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE)

2026/2027

1. Policy Statement and Ethos

Orchard House School provides a coherent, age-appropriate programme of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE). The programme supports pupils to develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to lead healthy, safe, confident and responsible lives.

The curriculum reflects the school's values of Kindness, Honesty and Excellence and contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, British Values, safeguarding and preparation for life beyond the school.

The school recognises parents and carers as the primary educators of their children in matters relating to relationships, health and personal development. The school seeks to work in partnership with families and to communicate clearly about the content and purpose of the curriculum.

2. Aims

- develop pupils' self-awareness, confidence, resilience and emotional literacy;
- help pupils understand and manage emotions and develop positive mental wellbeing;
- develop respectful, caring and healthy relationships with family, friends, peers and adults;
- teach pupils how to recognise unsafe situations, maintain appropriate boundaries and seek help;
- support pupils to understand how their bodies grow and change, including puberty and menstrual wellbeing;
- develop knowledge and habits that support physical health, hygiene, nutrition, exercise, sleep and personal safety;
- help pupils understand risks associated with substances and harmful behaviours;
- develop safe, responsible and respectful behaviour online;
- promote equality, inclusion, respect and tolerance;
- develop pupils' understanding of citizenship, democracy, responsibility and participation in the wider community;
- equip pupils to make informed, age-appropriate decisions and to resist harmful pressure or influence.

3. Definitions

RSHE includes Relationships Education, age-appropriate Sex Education and Health Education. Relationships Education covers the physical, social, emotional and legal aspects of relationships, including friendships, family relationships and relationships with other children and adults.

Sex Education at Orchard House refers to age-appropriate learning about human sexuality and reproduction beyond the statutory Relationships Education content. Biological aspects of reproduction are also taught through Science.

PSHCE is the broader programme through which pupils develop personal, social, health, citizenship and financial understanding. The programmes overlap and are deliberately coordinated rather than taught as isolated subjects.

4. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy has regard to the following legislation and guidance applicable to Orchard House School:

- Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: revised statutory guidance for introduction from 1 September 2026;
- Education Act 2002, including sections 80A and 403;
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended;
- Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty where applicable;
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, in force from 1 September 2026;
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- Human Rights Act 1998, where relevant;
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR, where relevant.

The school will keep this policy under review as statutory guidance, legislation and safeguarding expectations develop.

5. Curriculum Principles

- The curriculum is spiral and progressive, building knowledge, vocabulary, skills and confidence year by year.
- Teaching is developmentally appropriate and takes account of pupils' age, maturity, needs and prior learning.

- Teaching is inclusive and accessible, with reasonable adjustments and differentiation where required.
- Lessons provide a safe learning environment with agreed ground rules and clear expectations around respectful discussion.
- Teachers do not use scare tactics, humiliation or unnecessary shock.
- Pupils are given opportunities to ask questions, including anonymously where appropriate.
- Sensitive questions are answered factually and age-appropriately. Where a question cannot appropriately be answered in a whole-class setting, staff may address it individually or seek advice from the Head or DSL.
- Learning includes relevant online contexts, including digital relationships, privacy, harmful content and seeking help.

6. Provision across the School

Early Years Foundation Stage

PSED is embedded throughout the EYFS curriculum and supported through discrete teaching. Children develop self-regulation, managing self and building relationships; recognise and communicate feelings; form positive relationships; understand personal hygiene and health; and begin to understand personal safety, boundaries and differences between themselves and others.

Key Stage 1

Pupils develop understanding of families, friendships, emotions, respectful behaviour, personal safety, body awareness, hygiene, healthy lifestyles and online safety. They learn that families may be different while all children deserve care, safety and respect.

Key Stage 2

Pupils build on earlier learning through a more explicit programme covering relationships, emotional wellbeing, personal safety, online safety, puberty, menstrual wellbeing, body changes, healthy lifestyles, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, first aid, citizenship and preparation for adolescence.

In Forms 5 and 6, pupils receive developmentally appropriate teaching about puberty and the changing adolescent body, including physical and emotional changes and menstrual wellbeing. Human reproduction is taught through the

Science curriculum, with relevant RSHE teaching supporting understanding of relationships, health, responsibility and safety.

7. Core Curriculum Content

Relationships and Families

- characteristics of healthy and respectful relationships;
- friendships, kindness, trust, loyalty, honesty, generosity and managing disagreements;
- different family structures and respect for differences between families;
- recognising relationships that make a child feel unhappy, uncomfortable or unsafe;
- respectful behaviour and appropriate boundaries;
- bullying, cyberbullying and the responsibilities of bystanders;
- seeking help and identifying trusted adults.

Online Relationships and Safety

- the same expectations of respect and kindness apply online as offline;
- privacy and protecting personal information;
- recognising harmful content, contact and behaviour;
- understanding that people may not always be who they claim to be online;
- age restrictions and risks associated with social media, games and online services;
- reporting concerns and seeking support.

Health and Wellbeing

- mental wellbeing and the normal range of emotions;
- emotional vocabulary, self-care and resilience;
- physical activity, healthy eating and sleep;
- personal hygiene and dental health;
- sun safety and illness prevention;
- medicines, immunisation and vaccination as appropriate to age;
- basic first aid and knowing how to summon emergency help.

Puberty and Growing Up

- physical and emotional changes during puberty;
- menstrual wellbeing and the menstrual cycle;
- body care and hygiene;
- respect for privacy and personal boundaries;
- body autonomy and recognising appropriate and inappropriate contact;
- where to seek help and reliable information.

Substances and Risk

- age-appropriate factual information about alcohol, tobacco, vaping and drugs;
- the risks associated with harmful substances;
- peer pressure and strategies for making safe choices;
- how and where to seek help.

Citizenship and Personal Responsibility

- democracy and participation;
- the rule of law and responsibility;
- respect and tolerance;
- community participation and service;
- financial awareness and responsible decision-making;
- environmental responsibility.

8. Sex Education and Human Reproduction

The school provides age-appropriate learning about human reproduction. The biological aspects of reproduction are primarily taught through Science. Where additional sex education is provided through RSHE, it is carefully planned, age-appropriate and consistent with the school's values, safeguarding responsibilities and the DfE statutory guidance.

Parents and carers will be informed about the nature and content of any non-statutory sex education and will have the opportunity to discuss the provision with the school.

9. Parents' and Carers' Role and Right to Withdraw

The school recognises parents and carers as the primary educators of their children and will communicate openly about the RSHE/PSHCE programme.

There is no parental right to withdraw a child from statutory Relationships Education. There is also no right to withdraw a child from statutory Science teaching, including biological aspects of human reproduction where those form part of the Science curriculum.

Parents may request that their child be withdrawn from non-statutory sex education. Such requests should be made to the Head. The Head will discuss the request with the parent and ensure that the statutory requirements continue to be met. Alternative appropriate work will be provided where a pupil is withdrawn.

The school will make curriculum information available to parents and will provide reasonable opportunities for parents to ask questions about the programme.

10. Safeguarding, Confidentiality and Sensitive Issues

RSHE and PSHCE can prompt questions or disclosures relating to safeguarding. Staff must never promise a pupil absolute confidentiality. Pupils are told, in age-appropriate language, that information may need to be shared where there is a concern about their safety or the safety of another child.

- All safeguarding concerns or disclosures must be reported in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- The DSL and Deputy DSLs will be consulted where appropriate.
- Staff should record concerns promptly and factually through the school's safeguarding procedures.
- Teachers should not investigate or ask leading questions about possible abuse.
- Teaching must not inadvertently normalise harmful behaviour or imply that responsibility for abuse rests with the child.
- Staff will use professional judgement and seek advice from the Head or DSL when a question or disclosure raises safeguarding concerns.

11. Equality, Inclusion and SEND

The school is committed to equality of opportunity and an inclusive curriculum. Teaching will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate unlawfully against pupils.

Teachers will take account of pupils' differing needs, including SEND, EAL, developmental differences, cultural backgrounds and family circumstances. Resources, language, activities and expectations will be adapted where necessary.

Teaching about relationships, families and personal development will be respectful and age-appropriate. The school will challenge stereotyping, prejudice, bullying and discriminatory behaviour.

Where questions or issues concerning gender identity arise, staff will respond sensitively, follow the school's safeguarding and pastoral procedures, and seek advice from the Head/DSL where appropriate. The school will have regard to current DfE guidance and applicable law.

12. Teaching Approaches

- discussion, questioning and reflection;
- circle time and structured group work;
- role play and scenario-based learning;
- problem solving and decision-making activities;
- stories, books, visual resources and age-appropriate digital resources;
- assemblies and whole-school activities;
- visits, visitors and community activities where appropriate;
- anonymous question mechanisms where suitable.

External visitors and resources will be appropriately vetted, briefed and supervised. Staff remain responsible for the content and quality of teaching delivered by external contributors.

13. Resources

Orchard House uses the Jigsaw PSHE programme as the principal scheme supporting RSHE/PSHCE in KS1 and KS2. Staff may supplement this with carefully selected resources, books, videos and materials where necessary to meet the needs of pupils and the school curriculum. The RSHE/PSHCE Lead is

TBC responsible for ensuring that resources are current, age-appropriate and consistent with this policy.

14. Assessment, Reporting and Record Keeping

RSHE/PSHCE is assessed primarily through teacher observation, discussion, pupil participation, work and age-appropriate reflection or self-assessment. Assessment is used to identify understanding and inform future teaching rather than to create unnecessary written assessment.

Reports and parent meetings will communicate pupils' engagement and progress in accordance with the school's reporting arrangements. Records will be managed in accordance with the school's data protection and safeguarding procedures.

15. Roles and Responsibilities

Proprietor/Governing Body

- approve the policy and ensure appropriate oversight;
- ensure the school meets its legal and safeguarding responsibilities.

Headmistress

- provide strategic leadership;
- ensure the policy is implemented and reviewed;
- oversee parental concerns and requests to withdraw;
- ensure safeguarding concerns are managed appropriately.

RSHE/PSHCE Lead

- lead curriculum planning and progression;
- support and advise teachers;
- monitor teaching, resources and standards;
- identify professional development needs;
- keep the curriculum aligned with statutory guidance.

DSL

- provide safeguarding advice;

- support staff where RSHE/PSHCE raises safeguarding concerns;
- ensure concerns and disclosures are managed under safeguarding procedures.

Teachers

- deliver the curriculum sensitively and appropriately;
- establish safe classroom expectations;
- respond professionally to questions;
- report safeguarding concerns promptly;
- adapt teaching to pupils' needs.

All Staff

All staff contribute to the school's ethos of Kindness, Honesty and Excellence and model respectful, safe and responsible behaviour.

16. Monitoring and Evaluation

The RSHE/PSHCE Lead will monitor the effectiveness of the programme through lesson visits, curriculum review, pupil voice, work scrutiny, teacher feedback, assessment information and parent feedback. Findings will inform curriculum development and staff training.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are significant changes to legislation, statutory guidance or school practice.

17. Links with Other Policies

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Positive Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Science Curriculum Policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Acceptable Use / ICT Policy

Appendix 1 – Curriculum Overview

Early Years Foundation Stage

- self-regulation and managing feelings;
- building positive relationships;
- personal hygiene and health;
- personal safety and appropriate boundaries;
- similarities and differences between people and families.

Key Stage 1

- families and friendships;
- respect, kindness and inclusion;
- emotions and mental wellbeing;
- personal hygiene and healthy lifestyles;
- body awareness and personal safety;
- online safety and responsible behaviour.

Key Stage 2

- healthy and respectful relationships;
- bullying and peer pressure;
- online relationships, privacy and harmful content;
- mental wellbeing, resilience and self-care;
- physical health, nutrition, exercise and sleep;
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- first aid and emergency help;
- puberty, menstruation and the changing adolescent body;
- human reproduction through Science;
- citizenship, democracy, responsibility and financial awareness.

Appendix 2 – Policy and Guidance References

Key external references include:

- Department for Education – Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: guidance for introduction from 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education – Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, effective from 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education – Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026.
- Department for Education – Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (Effective September 2026).
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, as amended.
- Equality Act 2010.
- Education Act 2002.
- Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004.

Document status: Orchard House School internal policy. This policy should be read alongside the school's current safeguarding, behaviour, online safety, equality, SEND and Science policies.