



# PSHCE including RSE and Health Policy

## Policy

Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE) Policy  
(Including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education)

## Headteacher

Chris Stokes

## Policy Review Dates

Review Date	Changes made	By whom	Date shared with staff
March 2026	New combined policy taking account of new DFE guidance.	A Childe	March 2026

Date ratified by Governors	Review Date
March 2026	March 2029

# Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE) Policy

## Including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

### Introduction

**Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education (PSHCE)** is our comprehensive curriculum for supporting young people's personal development, health, wellbeing and understanding of relationships.

We are required by law to teach **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** and **Health Education** to all secondary-aged pupils. We deliver these statutory subjects within our broader PSHCE programme, which also includes elements of age-appropriate **economic education** (preparing young people to understand financial matters and the world of work) and **citizenship education** (including fundamental British values, helping pupils understand their rights, responsibilities and role in society).

The DfE statutory guidance (July 2025) states:

*"Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development."*

This policy explains our whole-school approach to PSHCE education and how we meet our statutory duties.

### 1. Our Vision for PSHCE Education

At Bedale High School, we believe that every young person deserves an education that prepares them not just academically, but as rounded individuals ready to navigate the complexities of modern life. Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship and Economic Education sits at the heart of this commitment.

PSHCE education is not an add-on to our curriculum – it is fundamental to our pupils' development as confident, healthy, respectful members of society. Through high-quality PSHCE, we equip young people with the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to keep themselves healthy and safe, to develop their wellbeing, and to build positive, respectful relationships throughout their lives.

Our PSHCE curriculum actively supports every pupil to understand and manage their

emotions, to develop resilience in the face of challenges, and to make informed decisions that promote their own and others' wellbeing. **Developing emotional literacy** is central to this – helping young people to recognise, name and talk about feelings, both their own and others', creates the foundation for emotional wellbeing and positive relationships.

As the statutory guidance states:

*"Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right."*

### **We are committed to:**

- Supporting the whole young person – recognising that pupils' emotional and social development directly impacts their capacity to learn
- Creating a safe, inclusive environment where every pupil feels valued and able to discuss concerns without fear or stigma
- Building foundations for adulthood – providing age-appropriate learning that prepares young people for healthy relationships, independent living and active citizenship
- Working in partnership with families, recognising that parents are important educators in many aspects of relationships and health
- Embedding PSHCE across school life – not just in timetabled lessons, but through our values, relationships, and everyday interactions
- Ensuring all pupils understand the protected characteristics and the importance of equality and respect

## **2. Statutory Requirements and Curriculum Framework**

Under the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, all schools must provide a curriculum that:

- Promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils
- Prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 (as updated by July 2025 statutory guidance) make **Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)** and **Health Education** compulsory for all secondary-aged pupils. These subjects must be taught in all maintained schools, academies, independent schools, maintained special schools, non-maintained special schools, and alternative provision settings.

The guidance confirms:

*"The subjects are part of the basic school curriculum, which allows schools flexibility in developing their planned programme, integrated within a broad and balanced curriculum. Key aspects of RSHE are in scope for Ofsted inspection, for example, through inspectors' consideration of pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development."*

## **Our Approach to Statutory Compliance**

We deliver statutory RSE and Health Education within our comprehensive PSHCE programme, using materials from Jigsaw PSHCE 11–16. This provides pupils with a carefully sequenced, age-appropriate curriculum that meets all statutory requirements whilst also developing wider personal, social and economic capabilities.

**Our curriculum addresses all statutory requirements including:**

### **Relationships and Sex Education:**

- Families and committed relationships
- Respectful relationships (including online)
- Being safe (including recognising abuse, harassment and exploitation)
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- Consent, boundaries and healthy relationship characteristics
- The impact of pornography and online harms
- Contraception, STIs and sexual health services

### **Health Education:**

- Mental wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid (including CPR)
- Developing bodies

A detailed mapping document showing how our PSHCE programme covers every statutory outcome is available to view on request and the Curriculum Overview for PSHCE at Bedale High School and can be accessed on the school's website at [curriculum-overview-PSHCE.pdf](#)

## **3. A whole-school framework**

Our PSHCE curriculum provides a comprehensive, carefully sequenced scheme of work that brings consistency and progression to pupils' learning throughout their secondary education. Built on current research and best practice in adolescent development, safeguarding and health education, it is kept continuously up to date with evolving statutory guidance.

**The programme is distinctive in its approach:**

**Emotional literacy at the core** — Lessons systematically develop pupils' emotional vocabulary and understanding. Young people learn to recognise, name and discuss a wide range of feelings in themselves and others. This emotional literacy supports pupils' ability to share and discuss things that are important in their lives, to seek help when needed, and to

build positive relationships.

**Mindfulness approach** — Lessons incorporate mindfulness activities designed to support self-regulation and create a safe, focused space for learning. This consistent practice forms part of our approach to pupils' emotional wellbeing.

**Age-appropriate spiral curriculum** — Topics are revisited across year groups with increasing depth and complexity, enabling pupils to build on prior learning in line with their developing maturity and understanding.

**Participative, interactive teaching** — The statutory guidance emphasises that *"Effective teaching will be participative and interactive and will give pupils opportunities to develop skills and to discuss and critically evaluate complex relationship scenarios."* Our lessons are designed to be engaging and active, using discussion, role-play, case studies, problem-solving and critical evaluation to develop skills alongside knowledge.

**Skills for respectful dialogue** — PSHCE lessons provide regular opportunities for pupils to develop and practise essential communication skills including listening to others, expressing their own views clearly and respectfully, considering different perspectives, and engaging in constructive discussion.

## The Six Units

Our PSHCE curriculum is organised into six themed units, each exploring key aspects of personal development, relationships and health education:

Unit	Key Content
<b>Being Me in My World</b>	Personal identity, rights and responsibilities, community and global citizenship, online and offline influence, making a positive contribution
<b>Celebrating Difference</b>	Recognising and respecting diversity, understanding protected characteristics, challenging stereotypes and prejudice, addressing bullying (including online), building empathy
<b>Dreams and Goals</b>	Setting and working towards goals, career aspirations, developing perseverance and resilience, financial capability, working collaboratively
<b>Healthy Me</b>	Physical and mental health connections; nutrition, sleep, exercise; emotional wellbeing; drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping; risk management; healthy lifestyle choices, pregnancy and choices, contraception and sexual health
<b>Relationships</b>	Healthy and unhealthy relationship characteristics; families; friendships; romantic and intimate relationships; consent and boundaries; conflict resolution; recognising abuse; online relationships
<b>Changing Me</b>	Puberty and adolescent development; body image and self-esteem; developing independence, personal safety and managing risk, managing change and transitions

## Adapting the PSHCE curriculum for our School community

We recognise that our pupils, families and context have specific needs and characteristics.

Our PSHCE lead and teaching staff carefully consider each lesson's content and approach to ensure it is appropriate and relevant for our pupils, taking into account:

- The specific needs, experiences and developmental stages of pupils in each year group
- Pupil voice – gathered through feedback via methods such as within lessons, student council, surveys and/or discussions
- Local context and community considerations
- Current events or emerging issues affecting our pupils
- Feedback from parents, pupils and staff
- Our school's distinctive values and ethos

The guidance states that schools should develop curricula that are *"relevant, age and stage appropriate and accessible to pupils in their area, where appropriate working with local partners and other bodies to understand specific local issues and ensure needs are met."*

Where we make adaptations to the programme, these decisions are made thoughtfully, in consultation with senior leadership, and with reference to statutory requirements. Parents are informed about significant adaptations, particularly where these relate to sensitive content.

## 4. Curriculum Time and Whole-School Approach

### Dedicated Teaching Time

PSHCE/RSE is taught through dedicated curriculum time of one hour per week for all students. These explicit, timetabled lessons ensure that pupils receive the systematic teaching they need to develop essential knowledge and skills.

PSHCE is delivered by form tutors at Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) and a specialist PSHCE team at Key Stage 3 (Years 7-9), supported by comprehensive teaching and learning resources, and ongoing professional development.

### Beyond the Classroom: Embedding PSHCE in School Life

The statutory guidance emphasises that *"The curriculum is best delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships, supported by other school policies, including behaviour and safeguarding policies."*

We recognise that effective PSHCE education extends far beyond timetabled lessons. The skills, values and understanding developed in PSHCE sessions are reinforced and 'lived' throughout our school:

- **Assemblies and tutor time** regularly explore PSHCE themes, celebrating successes, exploring moral questions, and building whole-school awareness of current wellbeing and relationship topics
- **Our Positive Behaviour policy** reflects the principles taught in PSHCE, emphasising respect, kindness, responsibility and positive conflict resolution
- **Staff model** the values and behaviours promoted through PSHCE in all interactions with pupils and each other

- **Pupil leadership opportunities** enable young people to take responsibility and contribute to the school community
- **Recognition and reward systems** celebrate not just academic achievement but personal and social qualities – kindness, perseverance, respect, courage, and contribution to the community
- **Pastoral support systems** provide opportunities for pupils to seek help and discuss concerns
- **Our learning environment** reflects PSHCE values through displays, resources and visual prompts
- **Wellbeing in Mind Team** deliver small group and 1:1 sessions to support specific students
- **External visitors and ‘drop-down’ events**, for example Restart A Heart day delivered by Yorkshire Ambulance, and the County Lines workshops delivered by our local PCSOs.

## 5. Relationships and Sex Education: Statutory Content

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

RSE is compulsory for all secondary-aged pupils. The guidance states:

*"RSE in secondary should provide a clear progression from primary relationships education. RSE should provide young people with the information they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds. This should include the knowledge they need in later life to keep themselves and others safe, and how to avoid sexually transmitted infections and unplanned pregnancies."*

**Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education content.** Parents may request withdrawal from **sex education** only (see Section 6).

The guidance emphasises:

*"Effective RSE focuses on respect for oneself and others and does not encourage or normalise early sexual experimentation. By supporting confidence and self-esteem, RSE will enable young people to make their own choices about whether or when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent, and to resist pressure to have sex."*

**By the end of secondary school, our pupils will understand:**

### Families

- Different types of committed, stable relationships and how these contribute to wellbeing
- Why marriage and civil partnership are important relationship choices for many, including legal rights and protections not available to cohabiting couples
- That forced marriage and marriage under 18 are illegal; that 'common-law marriage' is a myth
- How families change over time; roles and responsibilities of parents
- How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help

## Respectful Relationships

- Characteristics of positive relationships (online and offline), including the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, boundaries and managing conflict
- The importance of self-esteem and having a positive relationship with oneself
- Practical skills for communicating respectfully, including in conflict situations
- Different types of bullying and how to respond; responsibilities of bystanders
- That ethical behaviour goes beyond consent – involving kindness, care and awareness of power dynamics
- How stereotypes (based on sex, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability) can cause damage
- How pornography can negatively influence attitudes and behaviours

The guidance states that pupils should understand *"that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok."*

## Online Safety and Awareness

- Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online
- Risks of sharing personal information; understanding privacy settings
- That social media accounts may be fake; that users may present exaggerated profiles
- The law on sharing images, including that keeping or forwarding sexual images of under-18s is a crime
- How to report concerns about material that has been circulated
- Understanding deepfakes and their potential harms
- That online content can normalise unhealthy behaviours; where to get support
- How technology can be used in bullying, harassment, stalking and coercive control
- How pornography presents a distorted picture and can influence behaviour negatively
- Risks of sextortion and online scams

The guidance is clear that pupils should understand *"that keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery."*

## Being Safe

- How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries
- Strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure (including sexual pressure)
- How to determine whether others are trustworthy; how to seek help
- How to increase personal safety in public spaces
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence; that it is never the victim's fault
- Laws relating to sexual violence, domestic abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation, grooming, forced marriage

- The physical and emotional damage of FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty, and the law
- That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences
- Where to seek support for worrying or abusive behaviour

### **Intimate and Sexual Relationships, Including Sexual Health**

- That sex, for those ready and over the age of consent, can and should be positive and enjoyable
- The law on age of consent; that many young people wait; that intimate relationships don't require sex
- Sexual consent and the capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time
- How choices about sex and relationships affect all aspects of health
- The full range of contraceptive choices and their efficacy
- Choices in relation to pregnancy (keeping the baby, adoption, abortion) with medically accurate information
- How STIs (including HIV) are transmitted; how risk can be reduced; importance of testing
- How alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- Where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

### **Health Education**

Health Education is compulsory for all secondary-aged pupils and there is no right of withdrawal.

The guidance states:

*"The aim of teaching about health and wellbeing is to enable pupils to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to understand the links between physical and mental health, to recognise when things are not right in their own health or the health of others and to seek support when needed. Schools should support pupils to develop strategies for self-regulation, perseverance and determination, even in the face of setbacks."*

**By the end of secondary school, our pupils will understand:**

#### **Mental Wellbeing**

- How to talk about emotions accurately using appropriate vocabulary
- Benefits of physical activity, sleep, time outdoors, community participation for mental wellbeing
- That happiness is linked to connection with others; that loneliness is normal and not shameful
- That worrying and feeling down are normal and not necessarily signs of mental health conditions

- Characteristics of common mental health conditions (anxiety, depression) presented factually
- How to critically evaluate activities that contribute to wellbeing
- How to overcome anxiety or barriers to participating in activities
- That gambling can lead to serious mental health harms
- The relationship between substance use and mental health

### **Wellbeing Online**

- Benefits of limiting time online; risks of excessive screen time
- Impact of unhealthy comparison with others online; how people curate online images
- How to identify and report harmful online behaviours
- Risks of online gambling and gambling-like content in gaming
- How advertising and information is targeted; prevalence of misinformation
- Risks of illegal behaviours online
- Serious risks of viewing content promoting self-harm, suicide or violence

### **Physical Health and Fitness**

- Characteristics of a healthy lifestyle; links between inactivity and ill-health
- That physical activity promotes wellbeing and combats stress
- Science of blood, organ and stem cell donation

### **Healthy Eating**

- How to maintain healthy eating; links between poor diet and health risks
- Risks of unhealthy weight gain (cancer, type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease)
- Impacts of alcohol on diet and weight

### **Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco and Vaping**

- Facts about illegal drugs and associated risks, including synthetic drugs and illicit vapes
- The law on supply and possession of illegal substances
- Physical and psychological risks of alcohol; what constitutes low-risk consumption in adulthood
- Consequences of problem alcohol use and dependency
- Dangers of misusing prescribed and over-the-counter medicines
- Harms from smoking tobacco (lung cancer, cardiovascular disease); benefits of quitting
- Facts about vaping, including harms to young people

### **Health Protection and Prevention**

- Personal hygiene, germs, treatment and prevention of infection, antibiotics
- Dental health and oral hygiene
- How and when to self-care for minor ailments; role of pharmacists
- Importance of taking responsibility for own health; benefits of self-examination and screening
- Facts about vaccination, immunisation and antimicrobial resistance
- Importance of good sleep; impact of screens on sleep
- Healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy; miscarriage and pregnancy loss

- How to navigate the healthcare system (GPs, A&E, sexual health clinics, pharmacies)
- Gillick competence and medical consent

### **Personal Safety**

- How to manage personal safety in independent situations
- How to recognise and manage peer influence on risk-taking
- Social and emotional skills to increase safety from conflict and violence
- Which trusted adults to talk to about violence and knife crime
- The law on knives and weapons (without using fear or suggesting knife-carrying is common)
- Risks and signs of grooming or exploitation

### **Basic First Aid**

- Basic treatment for common injuries
- Life-saving skills including CPR (usually taught after age 12)
- Purpose of defibrillators and how to use them

### **Developing Bodies**

- Main changes during puberty; the changing adolescent body and brain
- Menstrual and gynaecological health (average periods, period problems, endometriosis, PCOS)
- Reproductive health, fertility and menopause; impact of lifestyle on fertility

## **6. Sex Education and the Right to Withdraw**

### **What is Sex Education?**

Sex education at secondary level covers the detailed content about sexual activity, contraception, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and intimate relationships. This is distinct from:

- **Relationships Education** (which covers the broader aspects of healthy relationships, consent, safety—from which there is no right of withdrawal)
- **Health Education** (from which there is no right of withdrawal)
- **Science curriculum content** about reproduction (from which there is no right of withdrawal)

### **Parent Right to Request Withdrawal**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of **sex education** delivered as part of statutory RSE.

### **Parents do NOT have the right to withdraw children from:**

- Relationships Education content

- Health Education
- Science curriculum content, including content about reproduction

Schools need to define 'Sex Education' in their school policy and identify which lessons this content appears in. If a parent's request to withdraw their child is granted, teachers then know which lessons these students will NOT be allowed to attend.

Our PSHCE curriculum has developed lessons and resources that encourage Relationships Education and Sex Education to be delivered together so that sex education is always taught in the context of a healthy, supportive relationship. As we aim to deliver holistic learning, we would prefer all students to receive all of the RSHE programme. Before granting a request for a student to be removed from the lessons including sex education it is good practice to discuss this request with parents to clarify the context, nature and purpose of the RSE lessons and to listen to their concerns about any of the content and their child's learning for this topic.

### **Defining 'sex education'.**

The DfE guidance (2025) leaves schools free to define sex education within RSHE. At Bedale High School, we interpret Sex Education as 'Human reproduction, sexual intercourse and sexual behaviours' including:

- How human reproduction can happen (e.g. childbirth, sexual intercourse, IVF, surrogacy)
- Anatomy and biology (when linked to sexual activity)
- Sexual behaviours\*, risks, rights and responsibilities in a sexual relationship
- Sexual health and safer sex (e.g. contraception, sexually transmitted infections)

### **Process for Withdrawal Requests**

The guidance states:

*"Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, it is good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents, and the child if appropriate, to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate."*

The headteacher **may refuse a request in exceptional circumstances**, for example because of safeguarding concerns or a pupil's specific vulnerability.

### **Pupil Right to Opt Back In**

The guidance states:

*"From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. For example, if a pupil turns 16 during the autumn term, the pupil can opt back into sex education at any time after the start of the previous autumn term. Schools should ensure that pupils know they have this option."*

### **Arrangements During Withdrawal**

The guidance states: *"If a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal."*

### **How We Inform Parents**

We inform parents about sex education content by sending curriculum information at the start of each academic year, providing a term-by-term overview of the PSHCE curriculum of the school's website, and making all materials available for viewing on request.

A withdrawal request form is available on the next page.



## 7. Inclusive Practice and Equality

We are committed to an inclusive PSHCE/RSE curriculum that is accessible to and respectful of all pupils and families.

### Meeting the Equality Act 2010

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, ensuring that PSHCE/RSE is taught in a way that:

- Does not subject pupils to discrimination
- Promotes equality of opportunity
- Fosters good relations between people with protected characteristics and those without

**The protected characteristics are:** age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

The guidance states: *"Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics by the end of their secondary education."*

### Teaching about Families and Relationships

Our curriculum presents families in all their forms, recognising that pupils come from diverse family backgrounds including single parent families, same-sex parent families, families headed by grandparents, adoptive families, foster families, kinship care, blended families, and families from different cultural and religious backgrounds.

We ensure that no pupil is stigmatised based on their home circumstances and that all family structures are represented positively. When discussing families, we emphasise that committed, stable relationships provide love, care and security.

### Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Content

Throughout PSHCE/RSE, pupils learn that all people deserve to be treated with respect and kindness, regardless of difference.

The guidance states:

*"At secondary school, there should be an equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships, and secondary schools should ensure that this content is integrated into RSHE programmes of study rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. Schools should ensure that they cover all the facts about sexual health, including STIs, in a way that is relevant for all pupils, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or gender questioning."*

### Teaching about Biological Sex and Gender Reassignment

The guidance states:

*"Pupils should also be taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment. This should recognise that people have legal rights by virtue of their biological sex which are different from the rights of those of the opposite sex with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment. Pupils should also be taught to recognise that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment, as with the other protected characteristics, have protection from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity."*

The guidance further states:

*"In teaching this, schools should be mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate, and they should be careful not to endorse any particular view or teach it as fact. For example, they should not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity. Schools should avoid language and activities which repeat or enforce gender stereotypes. Schools should be mindful to avoid any suggestion that social transition is a simple solution to feelings of distress or discomfort."*

We encourage pupils to express their views respectfully whilst remaining respectful of others' opinions. Bullying or disrespectful language is never acceptable.

### **Challenging Stereotypes**

Throughout our curriculum, we actively challenge harmful stereotypes, including gender stereotypes that can limit aspirations, reinforce inequalities, or contribute to disrespectful behaviour.

Pupils learn to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice, understanding the links between sexist attitudes and violence against women and girls. We help pupils develop positive conceptions of masculinity and femininity and identify positive role models.

### **Supporting Pupils with SEND**

The guidance states:

*"Schools should be aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. RSHE can be particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities."*

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities receive appropriate, differentiated PSHCE/RSE education that meets their needs. Teachers adapt lessons to ensure content is accessible, using visual supports, simplified language, concrete examples, additional pre-teaching or small group work, multi-sensory approaches, extended processing time, and personalised resources where appropriate.

The SENDCO works closely with the PSHCE lead and teaching staff to ensure appropriate provision.

## **Respecting Religion and Belief**

We respect the religious backgrounds and beliefs of all families in our school community. PSHCE/RSE content is delivered in a factual, objective manner, presenting scientific and medical information accurately whilst being sensitive to diverse religious perspectives.

The guidance states:

*"All schools may teach about faith perspectives on these topics. In particular, schools with a religious character may teach their distinctive faith perspective on relationships, and balanced debate may take place about issues that are contentious. For example, the school may wish to reflect on faith teachings about certain topics as well as how their faith institutions may support people in matters of relationships and sex. Schools should be clear when they are delivering content that reflects religious belief."*

## **8. Safeguarding and Support**

PSHCE/RSE education has a crucial role in our safeguarding provision, equipping pupils with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves safe and to seek help when needed.

The guidance states:

*"Discussions about sensitive topics in RSHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff should know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused, including those who have seen, heard or experienced the effects of domestic abuse."*

**Through PSHCE/RSE, pupils learn to:**

- Recognise when relationships or situations are unsafe
- Understand that abuse is never their fault
- Know a range of trusted adults they can talk to
- Develop vocabulary to express concerns clearly
- Build confidence to keep asking for help until they are heard
- Understand their rights over their own bodies and personal information
- Recognise emotional, physical and sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation
- Identify risks online and in the physical world
- Understand what constitutes harmful sexual behaviour
- Develop resilience and strategies for managing difficult situations

### **Managing Disclosures and Concerns**

PSHCE/RSE lessons, particularly those addressing sensitive topics, may lead to disclosures from pupils. All staff are trained to:

- Respond calmly and supportively to disclosures
- Never promise confidentiality (explaining that some concerns must be shared to keep pupils safe)
- Listen carefully without asking leading questions

- Record concerns accurately and immediately
- Report all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead without delay

The guidance states:

*"Staff should handle personal information with due care and know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy). Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child."*

Pupils are informed at the start of PSHCE/RSE lessons how confidentiality works – that personal information shared during discussions will be treated with respect and care, but if a teacher is worried about a pupil's safety, they will need to share information with people who can help.

All staff delivering PSHCE/RSE are familiar with our safeguarding and child protection policy and procedures, including mandatory reporting duties. Where external visitors contribute to delivery, they are briefed on safeguarding procedures before working with pupils.

## **Signposting to Support**

We actively encourage pupils to talk with their families about worries and concerns. We also ensure pupils know how to access support from trusted adults at school and from external services.

Within lessons and through displays, information at the rear of the student exercise book, assemblies and communications, pupils are regularly informed about sources of support:

- Named trusted adults within school
- How to access pastoral support
- External helplines (e.g., Childline, The Mix)
- Online reporting tools (e.g., CEOP, Report Remove)
- Local sexual health services / YorSexual Health
- Emergency services and how to access them
- Shore Space (for concerns about sexual thoughts, feelings or behaviours)
- "Tell Us" tab on the school's homepage

## **9. Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers**

We recognise that parents are important educators in many aspects of relationships and health. Effective PSHCE/RSE works in partnership with families, supporting parents to continue conversations started in school and keeping them informed about what their children are learning.

The guidance states:

*"Schools should take steps to pro-actively engage parents and make sure they are aware of what is being taught in RSHE. These steps might include inviting parents into school to discuss the curriculum content and the importance of RSHE for wellbeing and safety, inviting them to discuss any concerns, and supporting parents in managing conversations with their children about RSHE topics."*

## **Consultation and Communication**

We consult with parents when developing and reviewing this policy, seeking their views on content, approach and resources. Examples of this include:

- Gathering parent views through surveys and consultation events
- Opportunities to view teaching materials
- Parent information sessions to explain curriculum content and answer questions
- Regular communication about the PSHCE/RSE curriculum through newsletters, the school website and parent communications

## **Viewing Teaching Materials**

The guidance states:

*"Schools should show parents a representative sample of the resources that they plan to use, enabling parents to continue conversations started in class, and should ensure that parents are able to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE on request."*

We want parents to feel informed about what their children are learning. We provide several ways for parents to access information:

- **Curriculum overviews** for each year group, available on our website
- **Parent portal access** to representative samples of teaching materials
- **Viewing materials in school** for parents who would like to explore materials in more depth
- **Parent information sessions** on specific topics

All materials used in PSHCE/RSE can be viewed by parents on request. To request access, please contact Mr Childe at [admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk)

## **Responding to Concerns**

We welcome parents/carers questions and concerns about PSHCE/RSE education. Parents/carers who have concerns should contact Mr Childe at [admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk)

We aim to address concerns through open, honest discussion, sharing curriculum materials, explaining the rationale for content, and demonstrating how teaching is age-appropriate and sensitively delivered.

## **10. Addressing Sensitive Topics**

### **Suicide Prevention**

The guidance states:

*"Secondary schools should also consider how to safely address suicide prevention. Many aspects of suicide prevention are addressed through the mental wellbeing curriculum. Starting in primary school, the curriculum includes recognising and talking about emotions, looking after one's own and others' wellbeing, being worried about friendships, other relationships, and judging whether feelings or behaviour require support."*

Our mental wellbeing curriculum addresses many aspects of suicide prevention, including recognising and talking about emotions, looking after wellbeing, coping when things go wrong, and seeking help from trusted adults.

The guidance further states:

*"Schools should consult mental health professionals and put in place high quality, evidence-based staff training before addressing suicide directly with secondary aged pupils, to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to do this safely. It is important that teachers use language and content that is accurate, straightforward and appropriate to the level of understanding of the class. They should take particular care not to discuss instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos or images as there is a risk this could signpost pupils towards dangerous ideas and online content of which they may not previously have been aware."*

We consider carefully when it is suitable to deliver this content, taking into account age, maturity, personal experiences, parental views, and staff confidence.

### **Eating Disorders**

The guidance states:

*"It is also important that schools take a similar approach to addressing eating disorders, ensuring that staff have the knowledge and skills to do this safely. Teachers should take care to avoid language which romanticises eating disorders and avoid discussing instructions, methods or ideas of restriction, bingeing or purging."*

### **Self-Harm**

If staff have concerns about a specific pupil in relation to eating disorders, self-harm, suicidal ideation or attempts, or if a pupil discloses information, they follow safeguarding procedures immediately.

### **Sexual Harassment and Violence**

The guidance states:

*"Pupils should understand that anyone can be a victim of sexual violence, regardless of sex,*

*sexual orientation, gender reassignment or any other protected characteristic, and that the victim is never to blame. It is important to acknowledge that most sexual violence is committed against women and girls, and it often has a gendered component – for example, manifesting an inequality of power between men and women. However, anyone can be affected by sexual violence and teachers should avoid language which stigmatises boys or suggests that boys or men are always perpetrators or that girls or women are always victims."*

Staff are conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes, and take action to build a culture where prejudice is identified and tackled.

The guidance emphasises:

*"It is important for pupils to understand that ethical behaviour in friendships and other relationships goes beyond respecting boundaries and consent, and that strong relationships of all types involve kindness and care. RSE lessons should be clear that all sexual activity should involve kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person and an awareness of the power dynamics that can exist within relationships."*

Where misogynistic ideas are expressed, staff challenge the ideas rather than the person expressing them.

## **11. Teacher Support and Professional Development**

High-quality PSHCE/RSE requires confident, well-supported teachers with the knowledge, skills and resources to deliver sensitive content effectively.

The guidance states that curriculum should be *"delivered by school staff or, where schools choose to use them, external providers who have the knowledge, skills and confidence to create a safe and supportive environment and to facilitate participative and interactive education which aims to support and not to alarm pupils. Staff should be trained in safeguarding and offering support, recognising the increased possibility of disclosures."*

### **Supporting Our Staff**

We support staff delivering PSHCE/RSE through:

**Comprehensive resources** — Our PSHCE programme provides detailed lesson plans, teaching resources, assessment materials and guidance, ensuring consistency across year groups.

**Regular professional development** including:

- Using the PSHCE programme effectively
- Teaching sensitive and controversial topics
- Managing difficult questions and discussions
- Safeguarding and responding to disclosures
- Creating safe, inclusive classroom environments
- Understanding adolescent development

- Current issues affecting young people (e.g. online safety, mental health, sexual harassment)

**Collaborative planning and review** — Staff have opportunities to plan and review PSHCE/RSE teaching together, sharing effective practice and discussing challenges.

**Senior leadership support** — The PSHCE lead and senior leadership team provide ongoing support, including advising on complex situations and ensuring staff wellbeing.

**Access to specialist support** — Where needed, we access support from external specialists including school nurses, PSHCE advisors, mental health professionals and sexual health services.

## **Managing Difficult Questions**

The guidance states:

*"Pupils may ask questions about topics which go beyond any sex education covered by the school or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. The school's policy should explain how teachers will handle such questions, with an emphasis on supporting the child. This may include asking a pupil to speak to their parents or a trusted adult, signposting to support services where needed, and recognising that children whose questions go unanswered might instead turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online."*

Teachers are trained to handle such questions appropriately, which may include:

- Asking the pupil to speak to their parents or a trusted adult
- Signposting to support services
- Recognising that unanswered questions might lead pupils to inappropriate sources
- Knowing when questions are better addressed outside the classroom setting

The guidance also notes: *"When teaching sensitive topics, teachers can use approaches such as distancing techniques, setting ground rules with the class to help manage sensitive discussion, and using question boxes to allow pupils to raise issues anonymously."*

## **12. Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation**

We monitor and evaluate our PSHCE/RSE provision to ensure it meets pupils' needs, is delivered consistently, and has positive impact on pupils' wellbeing and development.

### **Assessing Progress**

Assessment in PSHCE/RSE focuses on:

- Knowledge and understanding of key concepts
- Development of skills (e.g., communication, decision-making, critical evaluation)
- Ability to apply learning to real situations
- Changes in attitudes and confidence

Teachers use a range of strategies including observation, review of work, pupil self-assessment, and formative assessments.

### **Monitoring Quality and Impact**

The PSHCE lead, working with senior leadership and governors, monitors provision through:

- Regular review of planning and teaching materials
- Learning walks and lesson observations
- Review of pupil work and assessment information
- Pupil voice activities
- Staff feedback on confidence and support needs
- Analysis of behaviour, wellbeing and safeguarding data
- Parent feedback

### **Evaluating Impact**

We evaluate impact by examining:

- Pupils' knowledge, skills and confidence
- Quality of relationships within the school
- Behaviour and ability to resolve conflicts
- Pupil wellbeing and mental health indicators
- Confidence in seeking help and reporting concerns
- Safeguarding data
- Reduction in bullying and harassment

## **13. Links to Other Policies and Curriculum Areas**

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety / E-Safety Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- SEND Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

### **Links Across the Curriculum**

The guidance states:

*"The lead teacher will need to work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the subjects complement and do not duplicate content covered in national curriculum subjects such as citizenship, science, computing and PE. The lead teacher will want to look for opportunities across other curriculum subjects to reinforce concepts introduced in RSHE, for example discussing misogyny in the context of history or using examples in literature to*

*discuss positive and less positive examples of relationships."*

PSHCE/RSE learning is reinforced through other subjects including:

- **Science** — human body, reproduction, health, drugs
- **Computing** — online safety, digital citizenship
- **PE** — physical health, teamwork, resilience
- **Citizenship** — rights, responsibilities, democracy, law
- **Religious Education** — moral questions, values, beliefs, diversity
- **English** — texts exploring relationships, identity, moral dilemmas
- **History** — discussing misogyny and equality in historical context

## 14. Policy Development, Review and Approval

This policy was developed through consultation with:

- School staff
- Parents and carers
- Pupils
- Governors

The policy is informed by:

- DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025)
- Jigsaw PSHCE 11–16 programme
- Local authority guidance
- Evidence from educational research

### Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date with statutory guidance, programme updates, emerging pupil needs, and stakeholder feedback.

### Responsibilities

**The PSHCE/RSE Lead** is responsible for overall coordination, keeping up to date with requirements, supporting staff, monitoring quality and impact, leading policy review, and liaising with parents and external agencies.

**The Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring statutory requirements are met, supporting staff, ensuring adequate resources and CPD, engaging with parents, and managing withdrawal requests.

**Governors** are responsible for ensuring the school meets statutory duties, approving this policy, monitoring implementation, and engaging with consultation.

The guidance states that governing boards should make sure that:

*"all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes; teaching is accessible to all pupils with SEND; curriculum content and teaching materials are aligned with this statutory guidance; clear information is provided for parents on the subject content, teaching materials and external providers, and on the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education."*

**All Staff** are responsible for delivering high-quality PSHCE/RSE, reinforcing learning throughout school life, responding appropriately to disclosures, modelling values, and engaging with professional development.

## **Further Information and Resources**

For more information about PSHCE/RSE at Bedale High School, please contact Mr Childe at [admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk](mailto:admin@bedalehighschool.org.uk)

### **External resources:**

- DfE Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education guidance (July 2025)
- PSHCE Association Programme of Study
- Jigsaw PSHCE mapping documents

*"Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness."*

— DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance, July 2025