



*Dynamic, empowered learners who thrive and lead in
their communities: locally, nationally and globally*

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED:	Autumn 2026
POLICY VERSION:	2
THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED:	Autumn 2027
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW:	Susan Gelder, Deputy Principal
THIS POLICY WAS CONSULTED WITH:	Staff, Pupils and Parents/carers
THIS POLICY WAS DISTRIBUTED TO:	Published on the College website

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the school's approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in a secondary school context, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance (DfE, updated 2026) and local safeguarding data relevant to the school.

RSHE is a core part of the school's safeguarding and personal development provision. It supports pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to:

- build safe, respectful relationships;
- make informed decisions;
- recognise risk and harm;
- maintain positive physical and mental health;
- navigate online and offline environments safely.

The curriculum at Sawston Village College, reflects a relational values, inclusive and safeguarding-led approach, recognising that pupils learn best in environments characterised by respect, belonging and emotional safety.

Definitions

Relationships Education: families, friendships, respectful relationships (including intimate relationships), online relationships and exploitation awareness.

Sex Education: teaching about sexual activity, reproduction, consent, contraception, STIs and sexual health.

Health Education: Physical health, mental wellbeing, emotional literacy and healthy lifestyles.

These are collectively referred to as RSHE Relationships, Sex and Health Education

2. Statutory Requirements

Sawston Village College complies with the statutory requirement to deliver:

- Relationships Education (compulsory)
- Relationships and Sex Education (compulsory in secondary schools)
- Health Education (compulsory)

This policy outlines the legal framework around relationships and sex education, how the curriculum is planned, quality checked and clarification of parental rights regarding withdrawal from non-statutory sex education. Parents should be aware that our academies must uphold the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and not discriminate against anyone with protected characteristics.

The curriculum reflects:

- DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Health Education (2026 update)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)
- Education Act 1996 & 2002
- Local safeguarding data to meet the needs of the school's students.

All statutory content is taught to all pupils. Teaching is factually accurate, age-appropriate, evidence-informed, free from political and religious bias.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Board / Trustees

- Approve the policy.
- Monitor statutory compliance and safeguarding outcomes.

Anglian Learning Executive Leadership Team

- Ensure that the Headteacher has the appropriate oversight and quality assurance processes in place.
- Work with headteachers to review compliance with this policy.

Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure effective implementation and quality assurance.
- Support staff training and curriculum oversight.

RSHE Lead

- Design and sequence the curriculum.
- Monitor delivery and impact.
- Lead staff development.

Teachers

- Deliver RSHE in a safe, inclusive and respectful manner.
- Facilitate discussion and manage sensitive content.
- Respond appropriately to questions.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Advise on safeguarding content and contextual risks.
- Manage disclosures and concerns arising from RSHE.

4. RSHE curriculum intent, design, sequencing and delivery

The RSHE curriculum is planned as part of a broader personal development and wellbeing offer. It is delivered through a carefully sequenced programme across all year groups.

Learning is revisited progressively so pupils build knowledge, confidence and understanding over time. The RSHE curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- develop respectful, consensual and healthy relationships;
- understand consent, boundaries, and communication;
- recognise abuse, coercion, exploitation and harmful behaviours;
- identify and manage risk, including online harms;
- understand sexual health, reproduction and contraception;
- develop emotional literacy, resilience and wellbeing;
- challenge prejudice, discrimination and harmful stereotypes;
- understand diversity in relationships, identities and families.

The curriculum prepares pupils for adulthood, modern society, and independent decision-making.

The curriculum is:

- sequenced from Year 7 to Year 11;
- developmentally appropriate and progressive;
- responsive to safeguarding and contextual risks.

Pupils learn about:

Relationships and Sex Education

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Consent (including active, informed consent).
- Sexual health, contraception and STIs.
- Intimate relationships and sexual behaviours.

- Abuse, exploitation, harassment and violence (including sexual violence and domestic abuse).
- Gender stereotypes and equality.

Online Safety and Digital Relationships

- Online identity and digital footprint.
- Pornography and unrealistic expectations.
- Sexting, image-based abuse and legal consequences.
- Online coercion and exploitation.

Health Education

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Physical health (including sleep, diet, substance misuse).
- Managing stress, anxiety and peer pressure.

Teaching is preventative, addressing risks before harm occurs.

RSHE is delivered through:

- Timetabled PSHE lessons.
- The mentor time programme and assemblies.
- Cross-curricular links (e.g. Science, PE, Computing).

External visitors may contribute but do not replace teacher-led delivery.

Teaching Approaches

Teaching is:

- Structured and discussion-based.
- Scenario based.
- Inclusive and trauma-informed.
- Delivered in a safe classroom environment consisting of mixed sex pupil groups.

Teachers will:

- Establish ground rules and set clear expectations.
- Use appropriate, factual language.
- Handle sensitive topics with care.
- Answer questions clearly, honestly and in an age appropriate manner within safeguarding boundaries.

Where questions fall outside the curriculum, teachers will respond appropriately and may follow up with safeguarding or parental communication where necessary.

Pupil Voice and Engagement

We will involve pupils in the evaluation and development of their RSHE curriculum.

The school will:

- gather pupil feedback regularly;
- consult with The Pupil Senate, Pupil Forums and surveys;
- encourage reflection and discussion.

Assessment

RSHE is not formally examined but is monitored through:

- discussion and questioning;
- reflection activities;
- teacher assessment of understanding.

Teaching is adapted where knowledge gaps are identified.

Inclusion and Equality

RSHE is inclusive and compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

Teaching:

- reflects diverse identities, relationships and families;
- promotes respect for protected characteristics, ensuring that these are taught exactly as stated in the Equality Act 2010;
- challenges discrimination and prejudice;
- supports all pupils, including those with SEND.

Adaptations are made to ensure accessibility and relevance for all learners.

Safeguarding and Pupil Safety

RSHE is a key part of safeguarding.

Pupils are taught to:

- recognise abuse and harmful behaviours;
- understand consent and personal boundaries;
- identify trusted adults and support systems;
- seek help confidently.

Key safeguarding themes include:

- sexual violence and harassment;
- exploitation (including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE);
- peer-on-peer abuse;
- online harms;
- coercion and control.

All staff follow safeguarding procedures. Disclosures are managed in line with school policy.

Parental Engagement and Right to Withdraw

Sawston Village College works in partnership with parents and carers.

Parents are informed about:

- curriculum content and timing;
- statutory requirements;
- safeguarding approaches.

Right to Withdraw

There is no parental right to withdraw their child from Relationships or Health Education

Parents may request withdrawal from sex education (non-science elements).

Requests are:

- made to the Headteacher;
- discussed to ensure informed decision-making and the potential detrimental effects of withdrawal.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide alternative supervision.

Curriculum Materials

A representative sample of curriculum resources for RSHE will be available to parents via the Bromcom parent platform during the Autumn term 2026.

Parents may request the opportunity to view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE and can do this via request to the Head of PSHE.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Sawston Village College evaluates RSHE through:

- lesson observations and curriculum review;

- pupil voice and feedback;
- safeguarding data and trends;
- staff and parent feedback;
- assessment data.

Leaders assess impact on:

- pupil safety and wellbeing;
- behaviour and attitudes;
- understanding of relationships and risk.

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with Anglian Learning staff, pupils, parents/carers and governing boards.

Appendices

Appendix A: Curriculum Overview

PSHE Programmes of Study, which include RSHE, can be found on our website at the link below:

<https://sawstonvc.org/curriculum/curriculum-rationale/subjects/pshe/>

These Programmes of Study provide more detail on what is taught during each topic. Pupils are also given knowledge organisers at the beginning of each PSHE unit of work which will be available on the College website during the 2026/27 academic year when they are finalised for each new unit.

Appendix B: Sex Education elements of RSHE

The law states that parents have a right to request that their children are withdrawn from Sex Education in school until three terms before they turn 16, at which point the child can opt back into the lessons. We would encourage parents to discuss any questions or concerns about the content of the lessons with the school before withdrawing.

The curriculum content containing sex education is detailed below, alongside where the relevant statutory guidance can be found.

Relevant statutory guidance that includes sex education	Where this is covered at SVC
ISR 1. That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 1-3 Year 10 Exploring consent and recognising abuse: lesson 1, lesson 3
ISR 2. The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 1-3 Year 10 Exploring consent and recognising abuse: lesson 1, lesson 3
ISR 3. Sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 1-3 Year 10 Exploring consent and recognising abuse: lesson 1, lesson 3, lesson 4 Year 11 Families, fertility and parenting: lesson 1*
ISR 4. That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 1-3 Year 10 Exploring consent and recognising abuse: lesson 1, lesson 3

ISR 5. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful.	Year 8 healthy and unhealthy relationships: lesson 4 Year 10 Exploring consent and recognising abuse: lesson 3
ISR 6. The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships: lessons 4-5 Year 11 Families, fertility and parenting: lesson 1*
ISR 7. That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.	Year 11 Families, fertility and parenting: lesson 3*
ISR 8. How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). [...] The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 4-5 Year 11 Health: lesson 1 (within wider lesson context)* Year 11 Families, fertility and parenting: lesson 1*
ISR 9. The prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 4-5 Year 11 Families, fertility and parenting: lesson 1*
ISR 10. How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships lessons 1-3
ISR 11. How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships [...]	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships Year 10 Exploring consent and recognising abuse lesson 3
ISR 12. How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.	Year 9 Intimate Sexual Relationships, lessons 4-5 Year 11 Families, fertility and parenting: lessons 1-3*

**(As this lesson is in year 11 this will be the choice of the child if they would like to participate or not)*

Appendix C: Parent Communication and Consultation

Parental consultation period 6-15 July 2026.

Following this consultation the following changes have been made to this policy:

- 1) In response to comments about all protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 being taught as stated in this legislation, “ensuring that these are taught exactly as stated in the Equality Act 2010” has been added to bullet point two in the Inclusion and Equality section.
- 2) In response to a request for clarity about whether classes are taught as mixed or single sex, “consisting of mixed sex pupil groups.” has been added to bullet point three in the ‘Teaching Approaches’ section.
- 3) In response to comments requesting further detail on what is being taught: “These Programmes of Study provide more detail on what is taught during each topic. Pupils are also given knowledge organisers at the beginning of each PSHE unit of work which will be available on the College website during the 2026/27 academic year when they are finalised for each new unit.” has been added to Appendix A- curriculum overview. All statutory elements listed in the DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Health Education (2026 update) document are covered during the five year curriculum.