Alfriston School

Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) Education and Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

November 2026

Context and Rationale

All schools must provide a curriculum that is broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of all pupils. Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, a PSHE curriculum:

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

Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) Education
At Alfriston Primary School, we teach Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education as a whole-school approach to underpin children's development as people and because we believe that this also supports their learning capacity.

To do this we use the 'Let's Talk' Programme which is a personal development programme that gives children life skills that prepare them for the modern world. It provides the capacity to consider the impact of choices and helps them grow as a person. Our PSHE curriculum also supports the aspects required under the Ofsted Inspection Framework, as well as significantly contributing to the school's Safeguarding and Equality Duties, the Government's British Values agenda and the SMSC (Spiritual, Moral, Social, Cultural) development opportunities provided for our children.

Statutory Relationships and Health Education

"Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools…

…The depth and breadth of views is clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and have told us that they see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. We agree with this principle and congratulate the many schools delivering outstanding provision to support the personal development and pastoral needs of their pupils. We are determined that the subjects must be deliverable and give schools flexibility to shape their curriculum according to the needs of their pupils and communities.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an

increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.

This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. We have endeavoured to ensure the content is proportionate and deliverable. Whilst we are not mandating content on financial education or careers, we want to support the high-quality teaching of these areas in all schools as part of a comprehensive programme, which complements the national curriculum where appropriate and meets the ambitions of the Careers Strategy. We know that many schools will choose to teach the compulsory content within a wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education or similar. Schools are encouraged to continue to do so, if this is right for them, and build on established, high quality programmes.

Extract from the Secretary of State Foreword - DfE Guidance 15th July 2025
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b8499e11b4ded2da19fd92/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education_and_health_education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

At Alfriston Primary School we value PSHE Education as one way to support children's development as human beings, to enable them to understand and respect who they are, to empower them with a voice and to equip them for life and learning.

We include the statutory Relationships and Health Education within our whole-school PSHE Education Programme.

Our PSHE Education policy is informed by existing DfE guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Equality Act 2010 and schools
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)
- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)

- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC)

This policy will be subject to thorough consultation with the whole-school community including pupils, parents/carers, staff, school governors and where relevant appropriate members of the wider community such as medical professionals and faith leaders. Pupil consultation has ensured that the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate PSHE Education curriculum, which includes Relationships & Health Education, that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities. A key aspect in employing effective teaching and learning strategies is the involvement of our pupils in their learning. We provide opportunities for them to evaluate both the resources and the teaching methods they preferred, were most comfortable with and best met their needs.

Policy values, aims and objectives

Our school's overarching aims and objectives are that we have high aspirations for all of our children to be safe, happy, confident, responsible and knowledgeable individuals who can learn at their best. We delight in equipping all children to achieve personal success and develop a lifelong love of learning. Our PSHE curriculum is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of PSHE Education lessons.

PSHE Education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. It equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their sexuality and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future.

We recognise the importance of PSHE Education in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The overarching objective of PSHE Education is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and provisions of the Equality Act, 2010.

Effective PSHE Education can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. PSHE Education will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

PSHE Education will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes.

Principles of effective PSHE Education lessons

PSHE Education provision at Alfriston School:

- Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons.
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in PSHE Education (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate).

- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.
- Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Gives a positive view of human sexuality with honest and medically accurate information so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex and nurture respect for different views.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online.
- Fosters gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in PSHE Education lessons and in everyday school life.
- Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Seeks pupils' views about PSHE Education so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

Personal, Social, Health and Economics (PSHE) Curriculum

'Let's Talk' is a curriculum designed and written for our school with our children in mind. Every term a strand of the curriculum is taught across the school with age appropriate progression designed to ensure pupils know more and remember more.

The units of our PSHE curriculum are:

- Building resilience
- Mental Wellbeing
- Respectful Relationships
- Health Education
- Caring Friendships
- Living in the Wider World.

See **Appendix 1** for more information about each of these units.

At Alfriston Primary School we allocate 1 lesson (approx. 50 mins to 1 hour) to PSHE Education each week in order to teach the PSHE knowledge and skills in a developmental and age-appropriate way.

These explicit lessons are reinforced and enhanced in many ways: Assemblies and collective worship, School Charter, our Life Values, British values, through relationships child to child, adult to child and adult to adult across the school. We aim to 'live' what is learnt and apply it to everyday situations in the school community.

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE)

RSE is taught within the Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) Education curriculum as part of our 'Let's Talk' programme. The RSE unit focuses on the statutory science aspects of the curriculum – building pupil knowledge and understanding year on year. RSE will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

See **Appendix 2** for more information about the RSE lessons across our school.

RSE is taught whilst taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Our intended RSE curriculum may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. If this is the case, parent/carers will be provided with appropriate notice before the amended programme is delivered. Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies and cross curricular links.

Teaching and learning

All staff involved in the delivery of PSHE Education have received specific training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches to PSHE Education throughout their time at Alfriston. Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

On occasions, external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of PSHE Education to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, our school will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs).
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- Arrange for the visitor to be supervised/supported by a member of school staff at all times.
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning.

Each lesson includes numerous opportunities for children to be active. This ranges from drama task, debates, real-life scenarios and discussions of misconceptions. Time is always provided at the end of each session for children (from the summer term in Year 1) to write or draw in their 'Let's Talk' journals (a class journal is shared by the teacher for the Reception children and at the start of Year 1). Above all, children are encouraged to explain how the lesson is relevant to their lives and how they will use the content discussed to develop their understanding.

Entitlement and equality of opportunity

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole-school community. PSHE Education will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all pupils have equal access to our RSE curriculum. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

Thorough consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including gender identity, faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with our school's Equality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion policy.

Responding to pupils' questions

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of PSHE Education, and in particular RSE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement.

Pupils will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions in an open setting and will also be provided with an opportunity to raise anonymous questions through the use of a 'questions box'. Staff will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson. Staff may delay answering a pupil's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer. Staff can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices. If a member of staff does not answer a question, the pupil will have the reasons clearly explained and the member of staff will work with the pupil to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the pupil to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

Confidentiality, signposting and handling disclosures

The school's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the beginning of PSHE Education teaching, and in particular at the beginning of every RSE lesson, the class will discuss and create/be reminded of their 'working agreement'. Confidentiality will be included within this agreement so pupils are clear of the limits of confidentiality that can be guaranteed by a teacher.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within RSE avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels

comfortable. This strategy makes RSE more accessible to all pupils including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Staff will signpost pupils to information relevant to the area being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Staff will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on coverage so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

Staff will conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the member of staff will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Staff will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will then deal with the matter in line with our school's safeguarding policy.

Involving parents and carers, and right to withdraw

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in PSHE Education and that PSHE Education, and RSE within it, is most effective when it is a collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The school will provide opportunities each year for parents and carers to meet with their child's teacher and review the resources being used as well as consider ways to build on the learning at home, fostering strong channels of communication between parents/carers and their children. See sample letter in **Appendix 3**. The school also operates an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss PSHE Education at relevant times throughout the school year.

The vast majority of PSHE Education is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science.

At Alfriston Primary School, puberty is taught as a statutory requirement of Health Education and covered by our 'Let's Talk' RSE Programme. We conclude that Sex Education refers to human reproduction, and therefore inform parents of their right to request their child be withdrawn from the RSE lessons that explicitly teach this i.e. The Year 5 lesson with the learning objective: I will know how the process of puberty relates to human reproduction. And, the Year 6 lesson with the learning objective: I will know how humans reproduce.

If a parent wishes their child to be excused from some or all of the non-statutory Sex Education (the lesson/s stated above for Year 5 and Year 6), they should discuss this with the headteacher, making clear which aspects they do not wish their child to participate in. The head teacher will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents/carers propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead). Once a decision has been made, parents/carers must inform the school in writing stating their reasons as to why they would like their child withdrawn.

Once these discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, our school will respect a parent/carers' request to have their child excused from non-statutory sex education. The school will document this process. Please see **Appendix 4**.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the headteacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Assessment

Pupils' learning will be assessed at the start of each unit and then two or three times during each term to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. The 'PSHE in Action' pages in the journals are specifically used for this purpose – the children (either as a class or in their individual journals) use these opportunities to share examples of when they have used what they have learned.

The quality of PSHE teaching and learning will be monitored through PSHE learning walks, book looks, pupil / staff / parent and carer voice, sharing of good practice within staff meetings, team teaching and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training needs.

Links to other school policies and curriculum

This policy complements the following policies:

- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- Online safety
- Equality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
- SEND
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Healthy School
- Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing

Monitoring and Review

The governing board monitors this policy on an annual basis. There is a named governor who specifically oversees this area of the curriculum and reports their findings and recommendations to the full governing board, as necessary, if the policy needs modification. The governing board gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the PSHE (RSE) programme, and makes a record of all such comments. The PSHE (RSE) Education link governor scrutinises and ratifies teaching materials to check they are in accordance with the school's ethos.

Appendix 1 - The units of our PSHE Curriculum 'Let's Talk'

Unit	Content
Building Resilience	Life challenges us every day. The lessons in this unit will help identify these challenges and give the tools to tackle them with confidence. Failure, emotions and other people are all covered along with developing a better understanding of our own triggers. Resilience – Emotions – Triggers & Tornado Zone – Other People 'The Arena' – Road to Success (managing setbacks) – Facing Mistakes
Respectful Relationships	This unit will help develop understanding of the different types of relationships, will signpost what makes a healthy relationship while pinpointing some of the challenges that make up connection. Families & People Who Care – Online Relationships – Bullying Behaviour – Collaboration – Stereotyping - Violence
Well-Being	These lessons are packed with ideas to help build happy and healthy lives. We first learn about the importance of talking and the different ways to express ourselves. We then tackle thought gremlins, gratitude and self-care. All crucial steps to boost our well-being. There will be opportunities to link the learning to the resilience term. Expressing Yourself – Thought Gremlins (unhelpful thoughts) – Values – Gratitude – Challenges – Circle of Kindness
Health Education	It is surprising how we sometimes forget to treat our bodies kindly. If you want to know what a healthy life looks like then this is your term. Here we focus on sleep, eating and exercise along with providing tips on staying safe in life and online. Sleep – Healthy Eating – Exercise – Harmful Habits – Online Safety – Keeping Safe
Caring Friendships	This term is all about developing the skills that create healthy friendships. Honesty, empathy and managing conflict are all covered in this section and will make it clear to you what it takes to be a good friend. Friendships – Empathy – Reporting – Honesty – Peer Pressure - Conflict
Wider World	Our ever-changing world can lead to a lot of questions. Questions about tolerance, money, change, work and serving the community. There is also a week on how to manage winning and losing. This section gives answers to these questions and provides important insights about the world we live in. Tolerance – Care for Community – Wellbeing Online – Money – Winning & Losing - Change

Appendix 2 - RSE lessons across our school

EYFS	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
I will know the importance of being clean and hygienic.	I will know the main parts of the body.	I will know how I will change as I get older.	I will know how to build my self-esteem.	I will know about menstruation.	I will know how my body changes as I go through puberty.	Sex Education: I will know how humans reproduce. *Parents have a right to withdraw their child from this lesson.*
I will know that some things need to be kept private.	I will know the needs of babies and young children.	I will when physical contact is unacceptable.	I will know how to respond to unwanted physical contact.	I will know how my body changes and develops.	Sex Education: I will know how the process of puberty relates to human production. *Parents have a right to withdraw their child from this lesson.*	I will know what is appropriate in friendships and wider relationships.
I will know what to do if someone's touch makes me feel unsafe.	I will know how to make sure that my worries are heard.	I will know the difference between a surprise and a secret.	I will know how to reduce the risks of hazards outside of the home.	I will know hygiene strategies to manage the changes during puberty.	I will know why discrimination is harmful.	I will know how the media can affect my self-esteem.

Appendix 3 – Sample Letter to Parents/Carers

Alfriston School
North Road
Alfriston,
Polegate,
East Sussex, BN26 5XB

E-Mail: office@alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
Website: www.alfriston.e-sussex.sch.uk
Telephone: (01323) 870203

Headteacher: Mrs Lindsey Hudson BA (Hons)

Dear Parents/Carers of children in Year 5/6,

We are writing to inform you that your child will be taught Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) from week commencing …….. until the end of term in line with the RSE and the Personal, Social, Health & Economic education (PSHEe) curriculum.

If you wish to discuss this and/or view the related materials, please contact either of us via the class email.

The vast majority of PSHE education is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. You are only able to request that your child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. Sex Education refers to human reproduction, and therefore you have the right to request your child be withdrawn from the RSE lessons that explicitly teach this i.e. The Year 5 lesson with the learning objective: I will know how the process of puberty relates to human reproduction. And, the Year 6 lesson with the learning objective: I will know how humans reproduce.

If you wish for your child to be excused from one or both of the lessons above, please discuss this with Mrs Hudson, making clear which aspects you do not wish your child to participate in. Following this discussion, if you still wish to withdraw your child, then you must inform the school in writing (using the template in Appendix 4 of our PSHE education and RSE Policy – a copy of this can also be obtained from the school office), stating your reasons as to why you would like your child withdrawn.

If your child is excused from Sex Education, we will respect this and will ensure that your child receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Yours sincerely

Class Teacher

Appendix 4 - Parent/Carer form: withdrawal from Sex Education

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Year group	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from some or all sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent/carer signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL
Agreed actions from discussion with parent/carer