The Discovery School PSHE and Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Rationale:

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is a statutory part of the curriculum in England and is delivered through our wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education programme. From September 2026, schools are required to have regard to the updated Department for Education statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education. This guidance strengthens the focus on safeguarding, healthy relationships, physical and mental wellbeing, personal safety, online safety, and preparing pupils for life in a modern and diverse society.

At primary level, Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory for all pupils. Through an age-appropriate curriculum, children learn about respectful relationships, family life, personal boundaries, consent in everyday interactions, emotional wellbeing, online safety, personal safety, change and loss, and how to seek help when needed. Pupils are also taught the correct scientific vocabulary for body parts and human development in line with the Science curriculum, safeguarding and health education requirements.

Our PSHE and RSHE curriculum is designed to support pupils to become confident, healthy, respectful and responsible citizens. The curriculum is delivered in a manner that is inclusive, evidence-informed, and responsive to the needs of our pupils and community, while reflecting statutory requirements, safeguarding responsibilities, equality duties, and current Department for Education guidance. This policy will be reviewed regularly to ensure continued compliance with all statutory expectations and best practice.

What is Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)?

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an important part of the curriculum that supports children and young people to develop the knowledge, skills, attributes and understanding they need to lead safe, healthy, happy and fulfilling lives. It enables pupils to build positive relationships, develop emotional literacy, understand how to keep themselves safe, and make informed and responsible decisions as they grow and develop.

RSHE includes learning about relationships, families, friendships, physical and mental wellbeing, growing and changing, online safety, personal safety, human development and, where appropriate, age-appropriate aspects of sex education. It supports pupils in understanding and respecting themselves and others and prepares them for life in a modern and diverse society.

Principles of RSHE

The following principles underpin the teaching of RSHE at The Discovery School:

- RSHE is an entitlement for all children and young people.
- Teaching will be age-appropriate, inclusive and responsive to the needs, experiences and developmental stage of all pupils.
- RSHE will provide accurate, evidence-informed and consistent messages that support pupils' wellbeing and safety.
- Learning will be progressive and developmental, building knowledge and skills over time.
- RSHE will promote self-respect, resilience, positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- RSHE will help pupils develop the knowledge and skills to build healthy, respectful relationships and recognise unhealthy or unsafe situations.
- RSHE will support pupils to recognise risks, stay safe online and offline, and know how and when to seek help.
- RSHE will reflect the school's safeguarding responsibilities and commitment to equality, respect and inclusion.

At The Discovery School, we believe that RSHE should be taught in a sensitive, age-appropriate and inclusive manner. It is about much more than the biological aspects of growth and reproduction. It encompasses the social, emotional, ethical and practical dimensions of relationships and equips children with the knowledge and skills they need to develop positive relationships, value diversity, show empathy and respect, and make safe and informed choices.

We recognise that parents and carers are children's first and most important educators. The School works in partnership with families to support children's personal development, wellbeing and understanding of relationships. Open communication between home and school helps to ensure that children receive consistent messages and support as they grow and develop.

Our RSHE programme contributes significantly to the ethos of The Discovery School by promoting kindness, respect, responsibility, inclusion, resilience and safeguarding awareness, enabling all pupils to flourish both now and in the future.

Aims

The aims of RSHE at The Discovery School are:

- To help pupils develop a positive sense of identity, self-worth and self-respect.
- To support pupils in building positive, respectful and healthy relationships with others.
- To develop pupils' emotional literacy, resilience and understanding of positive mental health and wellbeing.
- To teach pupils the correct scientific vocabulary for body parts, growth and human development.
- To help pupils understand different types of families and relationships and the importance of inclusion, kindness and respect.
- To equip pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to stay safe, both online and offline.
- To prepare pupils for the physical, emotional and social changes they will experience as they grow and develop.
- To enable pupils to become responsible, respectful and active citizens who contribute positively to society.

Objectives

Through RSHE, pupils will:

- Develop an age-appropriate understanding of human development, growth and reproduction, including the emotional and physical changes associated with puberty.
- Build confidence, self-esteem and positive relationships with others.
- Recognise the characteristics of healthy, respectful, and supportive relationships.
- Understand the importance of consent, personal boundaries and mutual respect in age-appropriate contexts.
- Develop strategies to support their emotional wellbeing and positive mental health.
- Learn how to identify, assess and manage risks in everyday situations.
- Recognise unsafe situations, including exploitation, abuse, bullying and online harms, and know how to seek help.
- Understand how to keep themselves safe online, including protecting personal information, managing digital interactions and responding appropriately to concerns.
- Develop the knowledge and skills needed to make informed, safe and responsible choices.
- Show respect for diversity, equality and the protected characteristics within modern British society.
- Be well prepared for transition to secondary school and the next stage of their education and personal development.

Principles of Teaching and Learning

Whilst a range of curriculum subjects contribute to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE), it is important that our programme is planned, progressive and coherent. Some aspects of the curriculum may be taught discretely through PSHE lessons, while others are embedded throughout the wider curriculum and school life.

Children's learning in RSHE is strengthened by the positive ethos at The Discovery School. Our culture of respect, inclusion, safeguarding, kindness and positive relationships supports pupils in developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for healthy relationships and lifelong wellbeing.

All members of the school community contribute to the delivery of RSHE. This includes teaching staff, lunchtime supervisors, pastoral staff, school leaders, visitors and external agencies. Assemblies, educational visits, enrichment activities and daily interactions all contribute to pupils' personal development and understanding of relationships, wellbeing and safety.

Effective RSHE teaching uses a range of inclusive and engaging approaches, including discussion, group work, circle time, role play, problem-solving activities, debate, stories, high-quality texts, multimedia resources and carefully selected visitors. Teaching encourages reflection, critical thinking, respectful dialogue, and the development of skills that enable pupils to stay safe, build healthy relationships and seek support when needed.

All RSHE teaching is age-appropriate, evidence-informed, inclusive and delivered within a safe learning environment that reflects the school's safeguarding responsibilities and equality duties. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions, challenge stereotypes and develop respect for themselves and others.

Specific Issues

Some aspects of RSHE involve sensitive learning. The Discovery School recognises the importance of working in partnership with parents and carers and ensuring that teaching is delivered sensitively, accurately and within the school's agreed values framework.
In Upper Key Stage 2, pupils are taught age-appropriate content relating to:

- Human growth and development.
- Puberty and physical changes (Year 5).
- Menstruation and menstrual wellbeing (Year 5).
- Emotional changes associated with puberty (Years 5 and 6).
- Personal hygiene and self-care during puberty.
- Human reproduction, pregnancy and birth (Year 6).
- Personal boundaries, body privacy and consent in age-appropriate contexts.
- Keeping safe online and offline, including recognising unsafe situations and seeking help.

Parents and carers will be informed when sensitive aspects of the curriculum are taught and will be provided with information about the content being covered.

The Curriculum

EYFS and KS1 Curriculum

Families and People Who Care for Me

- Identify the people who love and care for them and how this love and care is shown.
- Understand that families can take many forms and that loving family relationships are characterised by care, commitment and support.
- Recognise that families may be different from their own but are equally valuable.
- Know who to talk to if they are worried, unhappy or feel unsafe at home or elsewhere.

Caring Friendships

- Know how to make friends and what characterises a good friend.
- Understand the feelings of loneliness and how to seek help.
- Develop strategies for resolving disagreements.
- Understand how positive friendships support wellbeing.

Respectful Relationships

- Understand how to treat others with kindness, courtesy and respect.
- Understand the importance of privacy and personal boundaries.
- Know how to report bullying and seek support.
- Recognise that everyone deserves to be treated fairly and respectfully.

Online Relationships

- Understand that people can behave differently online and offline.
- Know that some people online may pretend to be someone they are not.
- Understand that information, photographs and messages shared online can be seen by others.
- Know to tell a trusted adult if something online makes them feel worried, uncomfortable or unsafe.

Internet Safety and Harms

- Understand the basic rules of online safety.
- Be aware of age restrictions that help keep children safe.
- Learn simple ways to protect personal information online.
- Begin to understand that not everything seen online is true.

Being Safe

- Understand the importance of not keeping secrets that make them feel worried, unsafe or uncomfortable.
- Identify trusted adults who can help them.
- Recognise risks in everyday situations.
- Understand basic road, water and fire safety.
- Know how to stay safe at home and in unfamiliar environments.
- Know how to seek help in an emergency, including how to contact emergency services.

Mental Wellbeing

- Understand how to maintain positive mental wellbeing.
- Identify and name a range of feelings and emotions.
- Recognise that people may experience different emotions in similar situations.
- Understand the importance of hobbies, interests and activities that promote wellbeing.
- Recognise when they or others may need support and know how to ask for help.
- Understand that change, loss, bereavement and transition may create different feelings and that support is available.

Physical Health and Fitness

- Understand how to stay physically healthy.
- Know how physical activity contributes to wellbeing.
- Recognise people who help us stay healthy.

Healthy Eating

- Understand the importance of a balanced diet.
- Recognise foods that support good health.

Health and Prevention

- Understand the importance of sleep, rest and relaxation.
- Allergy awareness - including anaphylaxis.
- Know that medicines, vaccinations and immunisations help to keep people healthy.
- Understand how good hygiene reduces the spread of germs.
- Recognise the importance of dental health.
- Know how to stay safe in the sun.
- Understand the importance of balancing screen time with play, physical activity and rest.

KS2 Curriculum

Families and People Who Care for Me

- Recognise that different types of relationships and families may exist.
- Understand that healthy family relationships are characterised by love, care, commitment, respect and support.
- Recognise and respect different family structures.

Caring Friendships

- Understand the importance of friendships and what constitutes a healthy friendship.
- Recognise qualities that contribute to positive friendships.
- Know how and when to seek help if feeling lonely, excluded or unsafe.

Respectful Relationships

- Understand that marriage and civil partnerships are legally recognised commitments.
- Know the impact of bullying and how to report concerns.
- Respect the importance of privacy and personal boundaries.
- Recognise when family relationships may cause feelings of discomfort or unhappiness and know how to seek support.
- Understand that everyone has a right to feel safe and respected.

- Recognise and challenge stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination.

Online Relationships

- Understand the impact of cyberbullying, trolling and online abuse.
- Recognise inappropriate or unsafe online behaviour.
- Understand how to protect personal information online.
- Know how to report concerns on websites, apps and games.
- Understand the importance of privacy settings.
- Understanding AI, its risks and ethics.

Internet Safety and Harms

- Recognise when online interactions make them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Understand the impact of online bullying.
- Recognise that people may act differently online and may not always be who they claim to be.
- Understand how social media can affect wellbeing.
- Be discerning when searching for information online.
- Understand online scams, fraud and financial harms, including gaming purchases.
- Recognise misinformation and unreliable online content.
- Understand how personal data and location settings affect online safety.
- Understand

Personal Safety and Being Safe

- Understand personal boundaries and how to respond safely to others.
- Understand permission and consent in age-appropriate contexts.
- Recognise when it is necessary to break confidence to keep themselves or others safe.
- Understand different types of physical contact and how to respond to unwanted contact.
- Recognise signs of exploitation, grooming and abuse.
- Understand road, rail, water and fire safety.
- Know where and how to report concerns about personal safety.
- Know how to respond appropriately in emergency situations.

Mental Wellbeing

- Understand the importance of maintaining good mental health and wellbeing.
- Know strategies for managing a range of emotions.
- Recognise signs that they or others may need additional support.
- Understand change and loss, including bereavement and transition.
- Develop a broad emotional vocabulary.
- Understand strategies that promote resilience and positive mental health.
- Develop an understanding of personal identity.

Physical Health and Fitness

- Identify habits that positively and negatively affect health and wellbeing.
- Understand the importance of healthy sleep routines.
- Recognise the impact of excessive screen time on physical and mental wellbeing.
- Understand the early signs of physical illness.
- Understand how hygiene, medicines and immunisations support good health.
- Know how to stay safe in the sun.
- Understand the importance of oral hygiene.

Healthy Eating

- Understand how to make informed decisions about food and nutrition.
- Recognise the elements of a healthy, balanced lifestyle.

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

- Understand the safe use of medicines.
- Recognise common household substances that may be harmful if misused.

- Understand the law relating to drugs.
- Know the risks associated with smoking, vaping, alcohol and other substances.
- Know where people can access help and support regarding substance misuse.

Health and Prevention

- Understand how vaccinations protect individuals and communities.
- Know how allergies and long-term health conditions can be managed safely.
- Understand how lifestyle choices can positively influence future health.
- Allergy awareness - including anaphylaxis and allergic reactions.

Basic First Aid

- Understand the purpose of first aid.
- Learn basic first-aid responses for common injuries.
- Know how to seek appropriate help in an emergency.
- Know how to contact emergency services and provide essential information.

Changing Adolescent Body

In Upper Key Stage 2, class teachers are responsible for teaching pupils about puberty, menstruation, and the changing adolescent body, including the physical and emotional changes that occur during this stage of development. This is taught through the statutory Science National Curriculum. An age-appropriate curriculum vocabulary list can be found in Appendix 2.

Working with Parents

RSE is monitored and evaluated as part of the school's wider curriculum monitoring and evaluation processes, which include feedback from governors, parents, and pupils.

Parents will be informed when the more formal aspects of RSE are taught in Upper Key Stage 2. They will be offered the opportunity to view the teaching materials in advance and may exercise their right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory sex education elements of the curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be made in writing using the form provided in Appendix 1 and addressed to the Headteacher. The school hopes that, through sensitive and supportive discussions between parents, the Headteacher, and the Class Teacher, any concerns can be addressed and withdrawal avoided where possible.

Parents should note that any content delivered through the statutory Science National Curriculum must be taught to all pupils and is not subject to the right of withdrawal.

Confidentiality

Teachers deliver Relationship and Sex Education in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner. The school seeks to answer pupils' questions honestly and respectfully, using correct scientific and anatomical vocabulary appropriate to the age and understanding of the child.

Where a question is considered beyond a child's level of understanding or is not appropriate to answer within the classroom setting, pupils may be encouraged to discuss the matter further with their parents or carers. In such circumstances, the Class Teacher will inform parents or carers so that they are aware of the question raised and can provide appropriate support and guidance at home should their child wish to discuss the matter further.

If a pupil makes a disclosure that raises safeguarding concerns, including concerns relating to

sexual activity, abuse, exploitation, or harm, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures immediately. The matter will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Equal Opportunities

At The Discovery School, teaching materials and learning activities reflect the diversity of modern Britain wherever appropriate. We are committed to promoting equality, inclusion, and respect for all individuals. We aim to challenge stereotypes and ensure that pupils develop an understanding of and respect for different cultures, religions, beliefs, family structures, and backgrounds.

Teachers may adapt resources, activities, and support to meet the needs of individual pupils and ensure that all children can access the curriculum successfully.

Reviewed: September 2026
Next review: September 2028 or sooner if required.

Appendix 1: Parent Form – withdrawal from sex education within RSE (not covered by the Science National Curriculum)

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS	
Name of child	
Name of parent	
Class	
Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education	
Any other information you would like the school to consider	
Parent Signature	
TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	

Appendix 2: RSE Subject Curriculum Vocabulary

The vocabulary which we use at The Discovery School within our Relationships and Sex curriculum is in relation to the statutory guidance for RSE from the Department of Education. This vocabulary is progressive throughout the school and will be revisited. All vocabulary is used in an age-appropriate manner. Our Discovery School Values (Friendship, Perseverance, Honesty, Respect and Kindness) are embedded across all our RSE and PSHE curriculum.

RSHE Vocabulary Progression by Year Group

Year Group	Vocabulary
EYFS	feelings, emotions, sharing, respect, kindness, perseverance, honesty, friendship, patience, family different, unique, special, people, rules and values. cooperate, share, agree, take turns, conflict, morals, wwellbeing, transition
Year 1	rules, ground rules, respect, safe, unsafe, opinion, learn, play, listen, think, interrupt, take turns, friend, friendship, co-operation, fairness, bullying, kindness, family, hazard, medicine, healthy, dentist, germs, allergy
Year 2	change, loss, emotion, documentary, streaming, critical thinking, grow, responsibility, penis, vulva, career, money, pedestrian, railway, environment
Year 3	identity, self-worth, belonging, nutrient, vitamin, password, phishing, risk, climate change, anaphylaxis, casualty, emergency, allergy
Year 4	risk, dosage, nicotine, conflict, budget, consent, stereotype, marriage, civil partnership
Year 5	wellbeing, prejudice, extremism, biodiversity, consent, boundaries, fraud, hacking, phishing, anaphylaxis, menstruation, allergy
Year 6	bereavement, consumer, spending, puberty, reproduction, contraception, artificial intelligence, ethics, apprenticeship, career path