



Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Date of last review	September 2026
Review cycle	Annual
Policy due for review and approval by Local Governing Body	Autumn 2027

Mission Statement

Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically.

Equalities Statement

All who work at Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all of its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practices.

This policy is written in conjunction with the SVC Safeguarding, Early Help and Child Protection Policy.

Saffron Valley Collegiate will be otherwise referred to as 'SVC' or 'school' in the following document.

Policy Context

This policy has been updated to reflect the statutory requirements for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) as outlined in the Department for Education guidance [RSE and health education guidance](#) and [KCSIE 2026](#).

At SVC we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSHE to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSHE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

The Aims of RSHE

The aims of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

Relationships Education:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Enable pupils to understand and respect differences, including protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- Teach pupils to recognise and challenge discrimination, including misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, and other forms of prejudice
- Equip pupils to understand healthy relationships, including recognising coercive and controlling behaviour
- Prepare pupils to understand consent and the law relating to sexual behaviour

Sex Education:

- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Provide age-appropriate understanding of human sexuality, reproduction, and sexual health
- Enable pupils to understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure
- Ensure pupils understand contraception and where to access confidential sexual health advice and support
- Help pupils understand the risks associated with sexual activity, including unplanned pregnancy

Health Education:

- Promote pupils' physical and mental wellbeing
- Enable pupils to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing
- Equip pupils to recognise and manage risks to their health, including online risks
- Support pupils to develop resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of RSHE can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities

of adult life, and can promote pupils' moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development.

Our Approach to RSHE

This policy covers Saffron Valley Collegiate's whole school approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE). We believe that RSHE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and wellbeing.

SVC is aware that students attending the school may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation, bullying and other issues. RSHE is particularly important for students with social, emotional and mental health needs or SEND.

RSHE at SVC will be adapted to ensure these subjects are accessible for all students. Where appropriate, some sessions may be delivered in single sex groups or on a 1-to-1 basis to facilitate greater learning for students. SVC aims to provide inclusive education for all students; therefore, the planning, delivery and resources for RSHE will give consideration to the cultural and religious beliefs of our students and we will recognise that family structures will vary across the cohort.

The curriculum and resources will be reviewed annually to ensure that SVC delivers age-appropriate content. Teaching about protected characteristics, including biological sex and gender reassignment, will be delivered in an age-appropriate, factual and sensitive manner that is consistent with the Equality Act 2010. We will ensure that pupils understand that:

- Biological sex is binary and immutable
- Gender reassignment is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010
- All pupils should be treated with respect and dignity

Social Transition

In line with KCSIE 2026, the school will not initiate any action regarding a pupil's social transition. We will only respond if a pupil or their parent specifically requests support in this area. Any such requests will be handled sensitively and in partnership with parents, with decisions made on a case-by-case basis in the best interests of the child. Staff will not adopt any changes relating to social transition without a decision involving parents, except in exceptionally rare cases where doing so would pose a greater risk to the child.

Discriminatory beliefs, language and behaviour will be challenged appropriately and monitored, with additional support and intervention made available for students as necessary.

SVC aims to ensure that all students are provided with RSHE that supports their physical, emotional and moral development, and helps them to learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Each key stage receives age-appropriate RSHE learning which is delivered through assemblies/tutor time/PSHE lessons/1:1 support and targeted group work. RSHE planning and delivery is underpinned by SVC values - **Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe**.

CURRICULUM

"Relationships, Sex and Health Education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional and physical development of students at school and of society and preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life."

RSHE teaching and learning at SVC aims to provide students with a greater understanding of the following concepts:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values, individual responsibility and moral considerations
- Learning the value of family life, and stable and loving relationships
- A clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure
- Linking RSHE with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour such as drugs, smoking and alcohol
- Exploring healthy relationships
- Learning the value of respect, love and care
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making
- Understanding the law with regard to consent and legal age of consent
- Exploring violence against women and girls and how to recognise coercive and controlling behaviour in relationships
- Understanding the impact of online misogynistic influencers and harmful content

Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to explore and manage emotions and feelings in relationships confidently and sensitively
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- Developing an understanding of the consequences of choices
- Managing conflict
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at age-appropriate stages
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- Understanding the risks of unplanned pregnancy
- Understanding the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes and the legal and safeguarding implications

Staff Training

All staff involved in delivering RSHE will receive appropriate training, which will include:

- Understanding the statutory requirements for RSHE
- Delivering age-appropriate and sensitive content
- Recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns, including those related to sexual harassment, sexual violence, and the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes
- Understanding how to challenge discriminatory behaviours including misogyny, misandry, homophobia, and biphobia
- Using appropriate teaching resources and external agencies

Training will be provided when the curriculum is updated and will be monitored by the PSHE Coordinator and Senior Leadership Team.

Staff who have been specifically trained may provide additional support where needed for students about different types of contraception, including emergency contraception and its effectiveness, and give students additional information and guidance on where they can obtain confidential advice, counselling and where

necessary, support young people in getting specialist health advice and prevention through contraception treatment, as part of a discussion about healthy and safe relationships. Young people are also able to ask to see the school nursing team. SVC recognises the importance of parental involvement in all aspects of their child's development and education; therefore students will be encouraged to speak to their parents and parents will be kept informed of support offered to students unless it is deemed that informing parents would increase the risk of harm to the student.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and 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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

Teaching Approach

Protective and preventative content will be taught in a way that:

- Does not cause alarm or distress to pupils
- Does not normalise risky behaviours and activities
- Provides factual, age-appropriate information
- Empowers pupils to make informed decisions and seek help when needed

Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

Use of Resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress
- Do not lead to "over blocking" that would result in unreasonable restrictions on what pupils can be taught

The school maintains appropriate filtering and monitoring systems to protect pupils online, in line with our statutory duties under KCSIE 2026. These systems are reviewed at least annually by the Senior Leadership Team member responsible for filtering and monitoring, supported by the Designated Safeguarding Lead and IT support.

USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We will:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The Teachers' Standards
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Human Rights Act 1998
 - The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We won't, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Board

The governing board will:

- Hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy
- Ensure that RSHE is taught consistently across the school
- Ensure that the policy is reviewed annually
- Ensure that parents and carers are consulted on the content of RSHE
- Ensure that the school's RSHE curriculum is appropriate and meets statutory requirements
- Monitor the effectiveness of RSHE provision

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school
- Sharing resources and materials with parents and carers
- Managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of sex education (see below – Parents' Right to Withdraw)
- Ensuring staff are appropriately trained to deliver RSHE
- Approving all requests to withdraw pupils from sex education (excluding content taught as part of the science curriculum)

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of sex education
- Being aware of and challenging discriminatory behaviours, including misogyny, misandry, homophobia, biphobia, sexual violence and sexual harassment

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We will:

- Consult with parents when developing and reviewing our RSHE policy and curriculum
- Provide opportunities for parents to view curriculum materials and resources
- Communicate with parents about the RSHE curriculum through parent meetings and communication/school website
- Make this policy and curriculum overview available on the school website
- Invite parents to discuss any concerns they may have about RSHE provision

Parents will be consulted when significant changes are proposed on the content and delivery of RSHE.

PARENTS' RIGHT TO WITHDRAWAL

- Parents/carers **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education or health education, as these are statutory requirements for all secondary school pupils.
- Parents/carers **do not** have the right to withdraw their child from any content that is taught as part of the science curriculum.
- Parents/carers **do** have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSHE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

Any request for withdrawal from sex education will result in the parent/carer being invited for a meeting with the Headteacher or other senior member of staff to discuss the request. This is to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This will 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. These meetings will be documented and a record kept of this process.

The headteacher will approve all requests to withdraw pupils from sex education, excluding content taught as part of the science curriculum.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the **PSHE Coordinator** through:

- Lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, etc.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

SAFEGUARDING

Where safeguarding concerns arise, staff report these to the Safeguarding Team, who will investigate further and take any necessary action. Students are made aware that staff at the school will share information in the best interests of the child, and as such confidentiality cannot be taken for granted. However, when information is shared, students are always informed how and why, and are given support and reassurance should further concerns arise.

In relation to health concerns and queries, students are signposted towards appropriate agencies – such as health care providers, clinics, the School Nursing Team for further support, confidential advice, resources and treatment.

In the event of staff becoming aware of a student under the age of 16 who is having or considering having sexual intercourse, the student would be encouraged and supported to speak to their parents/carers, as well as signposted to the relevant services.

Staff must be aware of the safeguarding risks associated with the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes (including images that are digitally altered or wholly generated by artificial intelligence). All incidents involving the making or sharing of nudes or semi-nudes must be responded to as a safeguarding matter and reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

When signposting students, due diligence will be given to ensure students are signposted to appropriate organisations that are free from agenda or ideology and who employ suitably qualified staff.

Person responsible for updating this policy: Head Teacher

Appendix 1

RSHE Curriculum Content

By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught the following content:

For Relationships Education:

- Families and people who care for me
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For Health Education:

- Mental wellbeing
- Internet safety and harms (including impact of online misogynistic influencers)
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- Health and prevention
- Basic first aid
- Changing adolescent body

For Sex Education:

- Specific content about human sexuality, reproduction, contraception, and sexual health

*See statutory guidance for detailed content - [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#)