

Varna Community Primary School



Policy and Guidelines Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Draft Policy for consultation

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1. Intent

PSHE is taught from nursery to year 6. The children's knowledge and understanding is built upon each year through the spiral curriculum of I Matter. Each area of the curriculum is repeated each year but advances in line with children's age and development. PSHE uses a range of games, books, written activities and calming techniques to deliver the aims of the curriculum. Topics engage and enthuse children and have been adapted to suit the needs of the school.

Pupils learn transferable skills in PSHE and RSHE, which they can apply to social situations and the wider world. Children are given the chance to self-reflect and evaluate their learning, which provides an assessment tool for teachers. We liaise with Healthy Schools in order to ensure consistency across Manchester and regularly access their support and services. It is our aim to give children a holistic learning experience to help prepare them for the future.

2. National Curriculum Expectations

As a maintained primary school we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

However, we are not required to provide sex education but we do need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSHE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society.

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.

An amendment to the Children and Social Work Act 2017 made **Relationships and Health Education** at primary; and Relationships, Sex, and Health Education at secondary, statutory subjects. The DfE guidance on Relationships, Health and Sex Education for governing bodies can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

Compulsory aspects of Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

End of primary expectations and curriculum content are set out in the Department for Education's statutory guidance, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, for teaching from September 2026. It is up to schools to determine how this is taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. Where a school delivers this as part of a whole programme of PSHE, such as I Matter, they are free to continue with this approach.

What is statutory?		Statutory RSHE	Recommended content
	Primary	Secondary	
Relationships and Sex Education	Growing up, puberty, friendships, relationships, private parts, appropriate touching, marriage, gender roles, forced marriage, FGM, reproduction	Healthy and unhealthy relationships (friendships and intimate), puberty, reproduction, pregnancy options, parenthood, FGM, forced marriage, consent, contraception, reproductive health	
Mental and Emotional Health	Feelings, emotions, secrets, discrimination, resilience, mental health, online safety, self-esteem, self-worth, personal qualities	Mental health, self-esteem, body image, bereavement and loss, online safety and awareness (inc. relationships, sexting, identity), pornography, extremism	
Keeping Safe (Injury Prevention and Drugs and Alcohol)	Keeping safe inside and outside, medicines, household substances, handling emergencies, risks, dares, first aid, drugs, managing influences	First aid (inc. CPR), safety and responsibilities, drugs and alcohol (inc. laws, effects, peer pressure), gambling	
Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating, physical activity, keeping clean, oral hygiene, sleep, vaccinations, recognising illness, sun safety	Healthy eating, physical exercise, oral and personal hygiene, vaccinations, blood, organ, stem-cell donation, self-examining, cancer prevention, sleep	
Living in the Wider World	British Values, financial education, environment, enterprise, Fair Trade, sustainability, aspirations, human rights, responsibilities and law	British Values, financial education, enterprise, aspirations, careers, employability skills, human rights, responsibilities, employee rights	

The purple content should be delivered as a part of a robust PSHE curriculum, it aims to meet [Ofsted](#) expectations and other statutory duties including [Safeguarding](#) and [Careers Education](#).

RSHE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet.

RSHE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. It also teaches them about the importance of a healthy lifestyle and positive mental health, about online and off line safety. Schools have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38).

- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an important part of pupils' personal development and is delivered through our PSHE curriculum.
- When any school provides RSE they must have regard to the Secretary of States guidance; this is a statutory duty. Ofsted will evaluate how schools help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for their children
- It is compulsory for all maintained schools to teach the parts of sex education that fall under National Curriculum Science, which must be taught to all pupils of primary and secondary age e.g. the biological aspects of puberty and reproduction (Education Act 1996, National Curriculum 2014).

3. Scheme of Work

For our RSHE scheme of work, we use the I Matter curriculum, created by Manchester Healthy Schools which is in line with statutory guidance from the DFE.

Why choose Manchester Healthy Schools scheme of work?

At Manchester Healthy Schools we believe that every school should have a robust PSHE provision, tailoring to the needs of their young people in their communities. All young people should have access to high-quality PSHE resources and health information and, with the support of our commissioners, we are committed to providing this for free to all Manchester schools.

4. Role of the Subject Coordinator

The subject coordinator:

- Is enthusiastic and positive in regards to their subject
- Is committed to raising the profile of the subject across the school
- Oversees quality outcomes across the whole school
- Keeps up to date with key research in regards to their subject
- Understand how pupils view their subject

5. Curriculum Content

See Appendix A

6. SEND Information

Varna Community Primary School is an inclusive environment where we welcome and celebrate diversity. In order to manage and support all pupils and their varying needs, reasonable adjustments are made within the school day across all subject areas. Teachers are responsible and accountable for the planning, teaching, assessment, progress and development of all the pupils in their class. High quality teaching is our first step in responding to pupils who have SEN/D. In addition to this we make the following adaptations

to ensure all pupils' needs are met. This is not an exhaustive list, but provides clear examples of support in place across the school:

- Differentiating our curriculum to ensure all pupils are able to access it, for example, by grouping, 1:1 work, teaching style, content of the lesson, etc. Some children may work from a curriculum lower than their peers for example Pre-Key stage pupils.
- Adapting and being flexible with our resources and staffing
- Using recommended aids, such as computing equipment, coloured overlays, visual timetables, larger font, fidget toys etc.
- Differentiating our teaching, for example, giving longer processing times, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, reading instructions aloud, etc.
- Some children may have an individualised timetable in order to support and meet their needs whilst at school.
- Additional interventions which are monitored and reviewed regularly, and at least every 6 – 8 weeks.

See Appendix B

7. Assessment

There is no assessment carried out in RSHE lessons. There is, however, the opportunity for self-assessment after each lesson for the pupils which gives further opportunities for reflection and discussion.

8. Equality

We teach a broad and balanced curriculum at Varna, and at no point is the curriculum narrowed. We plan units of work that can be accessed by all SEND and EAL learners as we believe our children possess unique gifts and qualities; as such they have the right to succeed, recognise their own greatness, and develop who they are in a respectful and caring environment. We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of this policy on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSHE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE, 2014b).

9. Other Key Information

Withdrawal from RSHE lessons

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from the non-statutory sex education elements of the RSHE curriculum. Before a request is agreed, the Headteacher (or a delegated member of staff) will meet with parents/carers to discuss the request, explore any concerns and explain the purpose and content of the curriculum.

Parents and carers cannot withdraw their child from:

- Relationships Education
- Health Education
- the statutory National Curriculum Science programme, including the biological aspects of human growth, reproduction and puberty.

Working with parents and carers

The school values the role of parents and carers and will consult them whenever the RSHE policy is reviewed or significant curriculum changes are proposed.

Parents and carers will be invited to comment on the draft policy as part of the school's consultation process. Feedback received will be considered before the policy is presented to the Governing Body for approval.

The government guidance on Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, 2026) emphasises the importance of schools working in partnership with parents and carers. Parents/carers should be aware that schools are legally required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Sex and relationships topics can arise incidentally in other subjects, such as Science, Geography, History, RE, and it is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions. Parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of Relationships Education and RSHE. Good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach can help increase confidence in the curriculum.

Consultation

This draft policy will be published on the school website for consultation with parents and carers during July–September 2026. Following consideration of any feedback received, the final policy will be presented to the Governing Body for approval in Autumn 2026.

Girl's understanding of sanitary products and disposal in school

As part of lessons on puberty girls will be made aware of the procedures in place for accessing and the safe disposal of sanitary products. The school is aware that period poverty can be an issue for some pupils, and will to the best of its ability ensure that girls have access to appropriate sanitary products during school time.

Safeguarding

Teachers need to be aware that sometimes disclosures may be made during I Matter lessons; in which case, safeguarding procedures must be followed immediately. Sometimes it is clear that certain children may need time to talk one-to-one after the lesson closes. It is important to

allow the time and appropriate staffing for this to happen. If disclosures occur, the school's disclosure and/or confidentiality policy is followed.

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

Answering Difficult Questions and Sensitive Issues

Staff members are aware that views around RSHE-related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSHE issues are taught without bias using I Matter. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion.

Both formal and informal RSHE arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Child Protection Coordinator if they are concerned.

Our school believes that RSHE should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support.

In I Matter Pieces (lessons) that cover RSE provision, this should be regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation and gender diversity, answer appropriate questions and offer support. LGBT+ bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the I Matter PSHE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss the I Matter PSHE programme through:

- Parent/carers I Matter awareness session
- Involvement in policy development
- Involvement in curriculum development
- Information leaflets/displays

10. Evaluation

Evaluation is carried out to improve the teaching and learning of RSHE within Varna. The RSHE coordinator and the curriculum coordinator appraise the curriculum provision made for RSHE within the school, in order that pupils make the greatest possible progress.

Evaluation includes a review of the content of the RSHE curriculum to ensure that National Curriculum requirements are being fulfilled. The effectiveness of any INSET for RSHE provided internally or by an external agency is assessed by the subject and curriculum lead.

Evaluation can be by a number of methods, including: the assessment of pupils' work, achievements and pupil voice; the analysis of teachers' planning; discussion amongst groups of staff or all staff including staff voice; classroom observation, and external inspection and advice.

The policy is reviewed every year.

11. Appendices

Appendix A – Curriculum Content

In year one, we will cover:

Families - who are the people in my life that love and care for me?

Differences - what are the similarities and differences between people

Body parts - Similarities and differences including scientific naming of body parts

In year two, we will cover:

Privacy - What is private? (body parts including the scientific naming of body parts)

Growing up - What happens when the body grows young to old? (life cycle)

Fair and unfair - What is fair, unfair, kind and unkind? (friendships)

In year three, we will cover:

Personal space- What is personal space?

Healthy relationships - What does a healthy relationship look like?

Equal relationships - Why is being equal important in relationships?

In year four, we will cover:

Diversity - What is diversity?

Gender roles - Do boys and girls have different roles?

Changes to my body- What changes happen to my body?

(Separate boys and girls sessions including the scientific naming of body parts)

In year five, we will cover:

Our bodies during puberty - What is puberty?

(separate boys/girls sessions including the scientific naming of body parts)

Relationships - What are the different relationships in my life?

Unwanted touch - What is unwanted touch?

In year six, we will cover:

Changes in my life - What changes happen in my life? (Responsibilities)

Loving relationships - What happens in a loving relationship? (Including marriage)

Puberty - Physical and emotional changes

(Separate boys/girls sessions including scientific vocabulary for body parts)

Appendix B – SEND Information

EYFS

Universal	Visual representations of PSHE/PSED. In foundation stage, hold expectations of a lower developmental stage in PSED (using Development Matters)
Targeted class action plan / IEP	For children who are unable to mark- make or effectively record their responses to learning, children could record in a different way e.g. through video recordings or verbal responses
Specialist EHCP	One to one adult support to access learning in PSHE/PSED and meet relevant expectations. Video recordings or verbal responses instead of written responses, if necessary

KS1 and KS2

Universal	Quality first teaching, group discussions in a safe and encouraging environment. Class teacher always leads sessions. Chance to pair work, share and discuss. Visuals to support learning – key characters I Matter piece and cat.
Targeted class action plan / IEP	Support and guidance in discussion and independent task work..Talk to the children ahead of the session to give them time to think and chance to build a response to share during discussions.
Specialist EHCP	Adult support and visual representations. Alterations made to the independent task if appropriate.