RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION POLICY

This section should be completed following ratification of the Policy.

Audience	Trust Leaders, All teachers, all school staff, parents via websites
Ratified	November 2026
Other Related Policies	Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
Policy Owner	Executive Team
Review Frequency	Within 24 months

Ownership
Preston Hedges Trust is responsible for the production and maintenance of this document. It is issued by the Clerk, clerk@prestonhedges.org to whom any change requests or queries should be directed.

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1. Aims and Legal Framework

The aims of relationships education at our Trust are to:

- Provide children with the information to be able to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and prepare them for adult life
- 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 relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Prepare pupils for puberty, the changes they will experience as they develop and the importance of health and hygiene

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act 2002, section 80A
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act 2017, section 34
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- DfE (2013, updated 2015) 'Science programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
- DfE (2025) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' revised statutory guidance from 1st September
- DfE (2020 updated 2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2026) 'Keeping children safe in education 2026'

2. Statutory Requirements

Relationships Education is compulsory in all Primary Schools in England. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. As a Trust, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act Families 2017.

In teaching Relationships and Health Education, we are 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 and Section 80A of the Education Act 2002. For further statutory guidance, see Relationships Education, Sex and Relationships Education (RSE) and Health Education DFE, (published 2026)

3. Definition

Relationships Education and Health Education is about ensuring the emotional, social and cultural development of pupil and is anchored in an understanding of positive relationships, so that they can keep themselves and others safe. Pupils focus on developing respectful and kind relationships, whilst learning about diversity and personal identity. Relationship Education involves sharing information, exploring issues and developing values.

Health Education ensures pupils have an understanding of their physical health; health protection and prevention; healthy eating; outlining the links between physical health and mental well-being ; promoting an understanding of how to stay safe online and keep a positive well-being. It also ensures pupils have an awareness of the impact of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, staying safe, basic first aid and their developing bodies through puberty. y.

4. Curriculum

We have developed our curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into consideration the age, needs and feelings of our pupils.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Changes to the body

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life 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 curriculum enables schools to ensure that all family types are represented.

Relationships Education supports our whole school values including respect and tolerance. Children are taught about a variety of relationships sensitively and respectfully.

Our curriculum may be adapted to meet the needs to individual children and their circumstances.

5. Relationships Education Curriculum Content

Area of Content	Pupils should know:
Families and people who care for me	• That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. • That the families of other children, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they

	should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • That marriage and civil partnerships represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring friendships	• How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships. •That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it. The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties. • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened. • How to manage conflict and that resorting to violence is never right. • How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed.
Respectful, kind relationships	• How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated. • The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family and adults. • How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect: how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration.

	• Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs. • That they can be expect to be treated with respect by others and the importance of respecting others, including those with different (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs. • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • The conventions of courtesy and manners. • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests. • The different types of bullying (including online bullying),the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype. • How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.
Online safety and awareness relationships	• That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure. • How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of he risks associated with peopke they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact and how to report this. • That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults.

	• The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect online information. • Online risks, including that any material online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words have been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up. That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online.
Being safe	• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context). • The concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe contact, including physical contact. • How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust. • How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and the confidence needed to do so. • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/ or other sources.

6. Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing Curriculum Content

Area of Content	Pupil Should Know:
General wellbeing Please note, this is covered in our Wellbeing	• The benefits of physical activity, time outdoors, and helping others for health, wellbeing and happiness. Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, as well as hobbies, interests and community participation. • The importance of promoting general wellbeing and physical health.

Curriculum but in more detail.	• The range and scale of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) that they might experience in different situations. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal, affect everyone at different times, and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition. • How to recognise feelings and use varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings. • How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate. • That isolation and loneliness can affect children and the benefits of seeking support. that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing and how to seek help for themselves or others. here and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online). • It is common for people to experience mental ill health and early help can support.
Wellbeing Online	• That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits. Pupils should be supported to think about the positive and negative aspects of the internet. Pupils should be supported to discuss how online relationships can complement and support meaningful in-person relationships, but also how they might be in tension, and the reasons why online relationships are unlikely to be a good substitute for high quality in-person relationships, looking at the pros and cons of different ways of using online connection. • The benefits of limiting time spent online, , the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing. • How to consider the impact of their online behaviours on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online. • Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted. The risks relating to online gaming, video game monetisation, scams, fraud and other financial harms, and that gaming can become addictive.

	How to take a critical approach to what they see and read online and make responsible decisions about which content including content on social media and apps, is appropriate for them • That abuse, bullying and harassment can take place online and that this can impact well-being. How to seek support from trusted adults. • How to understand the information they find online, including from search engines and know how information is selected and targeted. • That they have right in relation to sharing personal data, privacy and content. • Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.
Physical health and fitness	• The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle. • The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, moderate and/or vigorous physical activity. • The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity). • How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health.
Healthy eating	• What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content). • Understanding the importance of a healthy relationship with food. • The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals. • The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health).
Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping	• The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, vaping, alcohol use and drug-taking. This should include the risks of nicotine addiction which are also caused by other nicotine products such as nicotine pouches.
Health protection and prevention	• How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body.

	• About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer. • The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for health, the amount of sleep recommended for their age, and practical steps for improving sleep, such as not using screens in their bedroom. The impact of poor sleep on weight, mood and ability to learn. • About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene, including brushing teeth twice a day with fluoride toothpaste, cleaning between teeth and regular check-ups at the dentist. • About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing. • The facts and scientific evidence relating to immunisation and vaccination. The introduction of topics should be aligned with when vaccinations are offered to pupils.
Personal Safety	• About hazards (including fire risks) that may cause harm, injury or risk and ways to reduce risks. • How to recognise risk and keep safe around roads, railways, including level crossings, and water, including the water safety code.
Basic first aid	• How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary, including the importance of reporting incidents rather than filming them. Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries and ailments, including head injuries.
Developing Bodies	• About growth and other ways the body can change and develop, particularly during adolescence. This topic should include the human lifecycle, and puberty should be discussed at a stage in this process. • The correct names of body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum, nipples. Pupils should understand that all of these parts of the body are private have skills to understand and express their own boundaries around these body parts. • The facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes, whilst the average age of the onset of menstruation is twelve, periods can start at eight, so covering this topic before girls' periods start will help them understand what to expect and avoid distress.

7. Delivery of the Curriculum

The Relationships Education and Health Education and Wellbeing Curriculum is taught through our Personal Development approach by staff on a weekly basis. This is also enhanced by regular assemblies on a weekly basis, Online Safety teaching and Religious Education (R.E). Our sessions are designed to promote positive, respectful discussion at an age-appropriate level through a variety of carefully selected stimulus and lesson plans. As with all other subjects, teachers adapt learning to ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND, are able to access and benefit from the learning.

In addition to these opportunities, we enrich our learning through a number of different experiences such as workshops, visitors, including from the police, visits and Worldly Wise Weeks. External Providers such as Life Education, ensure that key messages are reinforced to pupils, school staff always consult with these providers to ensure that the content matches that of our curriculum.

As a Trust, we have made the decision to solely focus on the relationship's education, we do not teach sex education in our schools. By teaching the relationships education, our curriculum does not involve explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity, but does cover sensitive topics such as understanding that there are different forms of abuse and how to report concerns to keep children safe. As outlined in the National Curriculum, the biological aspects that pupils are expected to cover in primary school are taught within the compulsory Science curriculum. If at any point in a lesson, pupils' questions in understanding their changing bodies move to considering areas of sex education, teachers will thank them for their question and advise them to ask it at home. However, if the question indicates a safeguarding concern, the DSL will be told immediately, and this will be reported on My Concern.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Performance Committee of the Trust Board will approve this policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that Relationships Education is taught consistently and effectively across the school.

The Principal will monitor the delivery of Relationships Education and Health Education through learning walks.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE

- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils

All teachers in our schools will teach Relationships Education in a sensitive and respectful manner. Pupils are expected to engage fully in Relationships Education and, when discussing issues related to relationships, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9. Parents' right to withdraw & consultation

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

The school will consult with parents when reviewing the content of the school's RHE curriculum.

The school will use the views of parents to inform decisions made about the curriculum content and delivery; however, parents will not be granted a 'veto' on curriculum content, and all final decisions will be made by the school in consultation with the Trust.

Parents can access the content of our curriculum our school websites or copies can be requested from the school office. If a parent wishes to view the individual lesson plans, these can be requested by contacting the school.

10 .Training

All staff teaching Relationships Education and Health Education will be provided with appropriate training, visitors may be invited into school to train our staff teams.