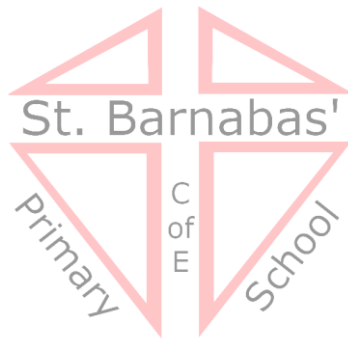




Heaton St Barnabas Church of England (VA) Primary School

DRAFT Policy for

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027

1. Policy statement

At Heaton St Barnabas, we recognise that children learn about relationships, health, themselves and the world around them from the moment they begin school.

As a Church of England school, our approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is rooted in our distinctive Christian vision and our commitment to enabling every child to flourish, realise their talents and 'let their lights shine'.

We believe that every child is uniquely created and loved by God and should be treated with dignity, kindness, respect and compassion. We seek to develop children who understand the value of themselves and others, can form positive and healthy relationships, recognise when something is not right, know how to keep themselves safe and have the confidence to seek help.

Our RSHE curriculum is therefore based upon:

- respect and dignity for every individual;
- kindness, compassion and forgiveness;
- honesty, integrity and trust;
- self-respect and positive self-esteem;
- healthy and respectful relationships;
- personal responsibility and appropriate boundaries;
- the importance of family and caring relationships;
- equality and respect for people who are different from ourselves;
- safeguarding and personal safety;
- helping children to make informed and responsible choices;
- the Christian understanding that relationships carry responsibilities towards ourselves, others and the wider community.

Our approach reflects the statutory **Relationships Education and Health Education** requirements for primary schools.

Our approach to Sex Education

Heaton St Barnabas CE Primary school does not provide additional, non-statutory sex education.

Sex education beyond the National Curriculum is not taught as a separate programme or subject within our school.

Where pupils encounter content relating to human development, puberty or reproduction, this is taught as required through the **National Curriculum for Science** and/or the statutory **Health Education** curriculum.

Parents therefore do not have a right to withdraw their children from statutory Relationships Education or Health Education, or from content taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science.

2. Statutory framework

This policy has been developed with regard to:

- The **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance**, revised July 2025 and effective from 1 September 2026;
- The **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019**;

- The **Education Act 1996**;
- The **Education Act 2002**;
- The **Children and Social Work Act 2017**;
- The **Equality Act 2010** and Public Sector Equality Duty;
- The **Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice**;
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**;
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children**;
- The National Curriculum for England, including Science;
- The **Early Years Foundation Stage statutory framework**, where applicable;
- Relevant Church of England guidance and resources concerning relationships, sex and health education.

The revised DfE statutory guidance states that primary schools must teach **Relationships Education and Health Education**. Sex Education is not compulsory in primary schools.

3. Aims

The aims of RSHE at Heaton St Barnabas are to help pupils:

1. develop positive, healthy and respectful relationships;
2. understand the importance of families and people who care for them;
3. develop and maintain caring friendships;
4. communicate respectfully and manage disagreements appropriately;
5. understand personal boundaries and respect the boundaries of others;
6. develop self-respect, confidence and a positive sense of identity;
7. understand that every person deserves dignity and respect;
8. recognise bullying, discrimination, prejudice and harmful behaviour;
9. understand how to keep themselves safe both online and offline;
10. recognise unsafe situations and know how to seek help;
11. understand that their body belongs to them and develop age-appropriate understanding of privacy and appropriate contact;
12. develop emotional literacy and strategies for managing feelings;
13. understand the importance of physical health and wellbeing;
14. develop healthy habits relating to physical activity, sleep, nutrition and hygiene;
15. understand changes that happen to the body as people grow and develop;
16. know the correct names for body parts and understand that some parts of the body are private;
17. understand menstruation and other age-appropriate aspects of developing bodies;

18. understand that they should never feel responsible for abuse or harmful behaviour directed towards them;
19. know who they can talk to if they are worried about themselves or somebody else;
20. develop the knowledge, skills and character needed to flourish as individuals and contribute positively to their community.

4. Church of England ethos

As a Church of England school, our teaching is underpinned by our Christian vision and values.

We believe that relationships should be characterised by:

- love;
- kindness;
- respect;
- honesty;
- faithfulness;
- compassion;
- forgiveness;
- responsibility;
- dignity.

Our teaching will provide opportunities for pupils to reflect upon Christian teachings concerning relationships, family life, respect, responsibility, human dignity and the value of each individual. The DfE guidance recognises that schools with a religious character may teach their distinctive faith perspective on relationships and that faith perspectives may be reflected upon when teaching these subjects. Schools should make clear when content reflects religious belief. Where Christian teaching is incorporated into RSHE, staff will distinguish clearly between:

- factual information;
- legal requirements;
- different viewpoints and beliefs; and
- the school's distinctive Christian perspective.

The school will never use its Christian character as a justification for discrimination, bullying or harassment.

The Church of England emphasises that RSHE should help children develop healthy relationships, dignity and respect, while allowing schools to reflect their own ethos and values.

5. What is Relationships Education?

Relationships Education is a statutory part of the primary curriculum.

It focuses on the knowledge and skills that enable children to develop positive relationships and to recognise and respond appropriately when relationships become unhealthy, unsafe or harmful.

By the end of primary school, pupils should have developed understanding across five broad areas:

Families and people who care for me

Children learn:

- why families and caring relationships are important;
- the characteristics of safe and happy family life;
- that families may look different from one another;
- that other children's families should be treated with respect;
- about stable, caring relationships;
- about marriage and civil partnership as legally recognised commitments;
- how to recognise when a family relationship makes them feel unhappy or unsafe;
- how to seek help when necessary.

The school will represent a range of family structures positively and sensitively, including families with single parents, grandparents, foster carers, adoptive parents, same-sex parents and other caring arrangements, in accordance with statutory guidance.

Caring friendships

Children learn:

- how friendships are formed and maintained;
- what makes a healthy friendship;
- kindness, honesty, trust and loyalty;
- how to include others;
- that friendships can experience difficulties;
- how to manage conflict;
- that violence is never an appropriate response;
- how to seek help when a friendship becomes unhealthy or upsetting.

Respectful and kind relationships

Children learn:

- how to show respect to others;
- how to recognise and respect boundaries;
- how to communicate effectively;
- how to manage disagreement and conflict;
- how to express their own needs appropriately;
- how to respect people who are different from themselves;
- the importance of manners and courtesy;
- self-respect and self-esteem;
- how to recognise and challenge bullying and stereotypes;
- how to seek help when concerned about harm or violence.

Online safety and awareness

Children learn:

- that the same principles of kindness and respect apply online as offline;
- how to communicate safely online;
- the importance of privacy;
- why they should be cautious about sharing personal information;
- how online relationships can present risks;
- that people may not always be who they claim to be online;
- how to recognise harmful contact or content;
- how to report concerns;
- that material shared online can be difficult or impossible to remove completely.

The revised guidance places particular emphasis on children's ability to recognise harmful online contact and content and to seek help.

Being safe

Children learn:

- about appropriate and inappropriate boundaries;
- about privacy;
- that their body belongs to them;
- the difference between appropriate and inappropriate contact;
- that some secrets should not be kept if they relate to safety;
- how to respond safely to adults they know and do not know;
- how to recognise unsafe relationships;
- how to report abuse or concerns;
- who they can talk to if they feel unsafe;
- that being abused or harmed is never the child's fault.

This aspect of the curriculum is closely linked to the school's safeguarding arrangements.

6. Health Education

Health Education is statutory for primary schools.

Our Health Education programme supports pupils to understand the relationship between physical health, emotional wellbeing and healthy relationships.

It includes age-appropriate teaching about:

- physical activity;
- nutrition and healthy eating;
- sleep;
- emotional wellbeing;
- feelings and emotional vocabulary;
- self-care;

- mental wellbeing;
- online wellbeing;
- physical health;
- personal hygiene;
- dental health;
- illness and health protection;
- vaccinations and immunisation;
- drugs, alcohol, smoking and vaping;
- personal safety;
- basic first aid;
- road, water and other safety;
- developing bodies.

The revised 2026 guidance specifically requires primary pupils to learn about growth and development, puberty, correct terminology for body parts, privacy and boundaries, and the menstrual cycle.

These areas will be taught in an age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate manner.

7. Developing bodies, puberty and menstruation

The school recognises that children develop at different rates and that some children may experience puberty earlier than their peers.

Teaching will therefore prepare pupils for changes before they occur, helping to reduce anxiety and embarrassment.

Children will learn:

- that bodies grow and change throughout life;
- that puberty is a normal stage of human development;
- about age-appropriate physical and emotional changes associated with puberty;
- the correct names for relevant body parts;
- that private body parts should be treated with respect;
- that everyone has a right to personal boundaries;
- about menstruation and what a period is;
- that periods can begin at different ages;
- how menstruation can affect physical and emotional wellbeing;
- where to access help and support.

The DfE guidance specifically states that pupils should learn the correct names for body parts, including the penis, vulva, vagina, testicles, scrotum and nipples, and understand that these parts are private. It also states that menstruation should be taught before periods begin for pupils who may experience them.

This content is taught as part of statutory **Health Education and Science**, rather than as additional sex education.

8. Science and human reproduction

The National Curriculum for Science remains separate from the school's Relationships Education programme.

Where the Science curriculum requires pupils to learn about:

- the human lifecycle;
- growth and development;
- puberty;
- reproduction;
- animals and reproduction;
- other relevant scientific knowledge,

this content will be taught in accordance with the National Curriculum.

The school does **not** add a separate programme of sex education covering sexual activity, contraception or sexual relationships.

Parents cannot withdraw children from statutory Science teaching, including relevant content concerning puberty or reproduction. The DfE statutory guidance explicitly confirms that there is no right to withdraw pupils from topics taught through the Science curriculum.

9. What the school does not teach

Heaton st Barnabas does not provide additional sex education beyond statutory Science.

In particular, the school does not provide a separate primary programme teaching:

- sexual activity;
- contraception;
- sexual intercourse as a standalone topic;
- sexually transmitted infections;
- sexual health;
- detailed sexual relationships.

These subjects form part of the secondary RSE curriculum rather than the primary statutory Relationships Education curriculum.

This distinction is important because the DfE guidance states that Relationships Education does not involve explaining the detail of different forms of sexual activity, although it may appropriately address issues such as sexual abuse, sexual violence, inappropriate material and safeguarding.

10. Safeguarding and protective education

RSHE contributes significantly to the school's safeguarding provision.

Children will be taught age-appropriate strategies for recognising and responding to:

- unsafe situations;
- inappropriate physical contact;
- bullying;

- abuse;
- harmful behaviour;
- unsafe online contact;
- inappropriate online content;
- pressure from others;
- situations where they feel uncomfortable or unsafe.

Teaching will emphasise that:

Children are never responsible for abuse or harmful behaviour directed towards them.

Children will be taught to:

1. recognise when something does not feel right;
2. move away from unsafe situations where possible;
3. tell a trusted adult;
4. keep telling until they are heard;
5. seek help for themselves or someone else.

The revised guidance states that staff should be aware that sensitive RSHE discussions can result in disclosures and that safeguarding procedures must be followed immediately where concerns arise.

Staff must never promise confidentiality to a pupil who makes a safeguarding disclosure.

Any concern or disclosure will be dealt with in accordance with the school's **Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy** and KCSIE 2026.

11. Equality, diversity and inclusion

The school is committed to ensuring that RSHE is accessible and inclusive for all pupils.

Teaching will promote:

- dignity;
- equality;
- respect;
- kindness;
- inclusion;
- freedom from discrimination and harassment.

The school will comply with the **Equality Act 2010** and will not discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics.

Children will learn to respect people who have different:

- families;
- backgrounds;
- abilities;
- characteristics;
- beliefs;

- experiences;
- circumstances.

The 2026 statutory guidance requires schools to ensure that RSHE does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

12. Sexual orientation and gender identity

At primary level, teaching will focus on healthy, respectful relationships, dignity, equality and respect.

The school will represent family structures sensitively and positively, including families with same-sex parents, alongside other family arrangements, as appropriate to the age and maturity of pupils.

The school will not promote or endorse any particular contested viewpoint.

Where questions arise concerning sexual orientation, biological sex or gender reassignment, staff will respond in an age-appropriate, sensitive and respectful manner and will follow the school's agreed curriculum and safeguarding procedures.

The revised DfE guidance encourages primary schools to include same-sex parents when teaching about families and requires all schools to comply with equality law.

As a Church of England school, our teaching may also reflect the school's distinctive Christian understanding of relationships and human dignity. The DfE guidance expressly permits schools with a religious character to teach their distinctive faith perspective, provided this is made clear.

13. SEND and accessibility

The RSHE curriculum will be accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Teachers will make appropriate adaptations to:

- language;
- resources;
- communication methods;
- visual supports;
- lesson structure;
- repetition and reinforcement;
- pace;
- groupings.

Where necessary, individual pupils may require additional teaching, repetition or support.

The revised statutory guidance highlights the particular importance of RSHE for pupils with SEND, who may be more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, bullying and harmful behaviour.

14. Teaching and learning

RSHE will be taught through a combination of:

- discrete PSHE/RSHE lessons;
- Science lessons;
- Computing and online safety;
- Collective Worship and reflection where appropriate;

- stories and literature;
- assemblies;
- wider curriculum opportunities;
- safeguarding education;
- everyday relationships and behaviour within school life.

Lessons will be:

- age appropriate;
- developmentally appropriate;
- inclusive;
- evidence-informed;
- sensitive;
- participative;
- carefully sequenced.

Teachers will create a safe classroom environment in which pupils can ask questions without embarrassment or fear.

Ground rules will be established before sensitive teaching, including expectations around:

- respectful language;
- listening;
- privacy;
- appropriate questions;
- not sharing personal experiences publicly;
- not making comments about other pupils.

15. Dealing with questions

Children are naturally curious and may ask questions that go beyond the planned curriculum.

Teachers will:

- respond calmly and respectfully;
- use age-appropriate language;
- answer questions honestly where appropriate;
- avoid introducing material that is not part of the planned curriculum;
- distinguish between what pupils need to know and what is beyond the scope of the lesson;
- signpost children towards a parent/carer or trusted adult where appropriate.

If a question relates to sexual activity or another area of sex education that the school does not teach, the teacher may explain that this is not part of the school's primary curriculum and encourage the child to discuss the question with a parent/carer or trusted adult.

Questions that indicate a safeguarding concern will be dealt with through safeguarding procedures.

16. Confidentiality

RSHE lessons are not confidential.

Children will be informed that while staff will respect their privacy, information relating to their safety or the safety of another person cannot be kept secret.

Staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures if a child:

- discloses abuse;
 - describes harmful behaviour;
 - indicates that they feel unsafe;
 - reports inappropriate contact;
 - raises concerns about another child or adult.
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17. Parents and carers

The school recognises parents and carers as the primary educators of their children in matters relating to relationships, values and personal development.

The school seeks to work in partnership with parents and carers by:

- communicating the purpose and content of RSHE;
 - consulting parents when developing and reviewing the policy;
 - providing opportunities for parents to discuss the curriculum;
 - making curriculum materials available to parents upon request;
 - supporting parents in discussing RSHE topics at home.
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The revised statutory guidance requires schools to proactively engage parents and to ensure that parents can access the materials used to teach RSHE.

Parents are not able to veto statutory curriculum content.

18. Right to withdraw

As **Heaton St Barnabas does not provide additional sex education beyond the National Curriculum for Science**, there are no additional sex education lessons from which parents may withdraw their child.

Parents **do not have the right to withdraw** their child from:

- Relationships Education;
 - Health Education;
 - statutory Science;
 - puberty content taught through Science or Health Education;
 - safeguarding education;
 - online safety education.
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The DfE guidance confirms that parents do not have a right to withdraw pupils from Relationships Education or Health Education, or from topics taught through Science, including puberty and sexual reproduction.

Should the school in future decide to introduce additional sex education beyond the Science curriculum, this policy will be amended and parents will be consulted in advance. Any statutory requirements relating to withdrawal would then apply.

19. External visitors and organisations

The school may use appropriately qualified external organisations or professionals to support RSHE where this adds value to the curriculum.

The school remains responsible for all content delivered by external providers.

Before an external provider is used, the school will:

- check the provider's credentials;
- review all teaching materials;
- check that content is age and stage appropriate;
- ensure resources are consistent with this policy;
- ensure content is consistent with the school's Christian ethos;
- clarify safeguarding arrangements;
- ensure parents can view relevant materials.

The revised DfE guidance makes clear that schools remain responsible for the content delivered by external providers and should check resources for accuracy, appropriateness and accessibility.

20. Curriculum organisation and progression

The school will maintain a progressive RSHE curriculum from Reception to Year 6.

The curriculum will revisit key concepts at increasing levels of complexity, including:

EYFS / Reception

- relationships with family and friends;
- feelings;
- kindness;
- sharing and turn-taking;
- personal boundaries;
- recognising trusted adults;
- personal hygiene;
- staying safe.

Key Stage 1

- families and caring relationships;
- friendships;
- kindness and respect;
- managing feelings;
- recognising bullying;
- personal boundaries;

- privacy;
- body ownership;
- trusted adults;
- online safety;
- basic health and hygiene.

Lower Key Stage 2

- healthy friendships;
- managing disagreements;
- respect and stereotypes;
- emotional wellbeing;
- online relationships;
- privacy and personal information;
- recognising unsafe situations;
- seeking help;
- healthy lifestyles;
- body changes and development.

Upper Key Stage 2

- developing and sustaining healthy relationships;
- managing conflict and peer pressure;
- boundaries and assertiveness;
- online relationships and harmful content;
- recognising abuse and exploitation;
- safeguarding and help-seeking;
- puberty and developing bodies;
- menstruation;
- self-esteem and wellbeing;
- preparation for transition to secondary school.

The exact curriculum sequence will be detailed in the school's RSHE curriculum map.

21. Monitoring and evaluation

The RSHE subject leader will monitor the implementation and impact of the curriculum through:

- curriculum reviews;
- lesson visits where appropriate;

- book/work scrutiny where appropriate;
- pupil voice;
- staff feedback;
- parent feedback;
- assessment information;
- review of resources;
- monitoring of safeguarding themes and emerging needs.

The subject leader will ensure that the curriculum remains:

- compliant with statutory requirements;
- age appropriate;
- developmentally appropriate;
- relevant to pupils;
- consistent with the school's Christian vision;
- inclusive and accessible.

The governing body will have oversight of the policy and curriculum provision.

22. Assessment

RSHE is assessed primarily through formative assessment.

Teachers will consider whether pupils can:

- recall key knowledge;
- explain concepts;
- demonstrate appropriate vocabulary;
- apply strategies to scenarios;
- identify safe and unsafe behaviours;
- explain how to seek help;
- demonstrate respectful attitudes and behaviours.

Assessment will not require pupils to disclose personal or family experiences.

23. Staff training

Staff responsible for teaching RSHE will receive appropriate guidance and support.

Training may include:

- curriculum requirements;
- safeguarding;
- handling sensitive questions;
- responding to disclosures;
- online safety;

- supporting pupils with SEND;
- age-appropriate language;
- equality and inclusion;
- the school's Christian approach.

Staff must be familiar with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and know how to report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

24. Policy development and review

This policy has been developed with reference to the statutory DfE guidance and the school's distinctive Christian vision.

The school will consult parents and consider pupil and staff views when reviewing the policy.

The policy will be reviewed **annually**, or earlier if:

- statutory guidance changes;
- safeguarding circumstances require an amendment;
- the school changes its curriculum provision;
- significant changes occur within the school or wider community.

Any significant change to the school's RSHE curriculum will be communicated to parents.

25. Related policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
 - Behaviour Policy;
 - Anti-Bullying Policy;
 - Online Safety Policy;
 - SEND Policy;
 - Equality Information and Objectives;
 - Science Policy;
 - PSHE Policy;
 - Collective Worship Policy;
 - Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy;
 - Attendance Policy;
 - Educational Visits Policy.
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26. Key statement for parents

At HSTB we teach the statutory primary Relationships Education and Health Education curriculum. We do not provide additional sex education beyond the National Curriculum for Science.

Our curriculum helps children understand families, friendships, kindness, respect, boundaries, emotions, personal safety, online safety, healthy lifestyles, growing and developing bodies, puberty and menstruation in an age-appropriate way.

Where human development or reproduction is taught through Science, this forms part of the statutory National Curriculum.
Our approach is rooted in our Christian vision and seeks to help every child understand their value and dignity, develop healthy relationships, stay safe and flourish.

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