RIDGEWAY FARM CE ACADEMY

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Believe • Learn • Grow

Policy owner	Headteacher
Reviewer(s)	Headteacher and Chair of Governors
Approval body	Local Governing Body
Policy date	September 2026
Approval date	30.9.26
Next review	September 2027, or earlier if guidance changes

To be read alongside:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy and Anti-Bullying Policy
- SEND Policy and Equality Information and Objectives
- Online Safety Policy
- Science and PSHE/RSHE curriculum maps.

Policy status

This replacement policy has been written for consultation and approval. It reflects the statutory guidance that came into effect on 1 September 2026 and introduces additional primary sex education in Years 5 and 6.

1. Our Christian vision and ethos

At Ridgeway Farm CE Academy, we believe that every person is created in the image of God, is deeply loved and must be treated with dignity. RSHE is an important part of enabling pupils to flourish emotionally, socially, physically and spiritually, and to learn how to live well with others.

"I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 10:10

Our teaching is rooted in the Christian understanding that human beings are made in God's image (Genesis 1:27). It promotes wisdom, hope, community, respect, forgiveness, responsibility and loving care. It supports our school vision, Believe • Learn • Grow, and our values of friendship, compassion, respect, courage, perseverance and service.

The school teaches the Church of England's distinctive Christian perspective on relationships clearly and sensitively. This includes the value placed on faithful, committed and lifelong relationships and on marriage. Pupils also learn accurate factual and legal information, including that marriage and civil partnership are legally recognised commitments, and that families take many forms. No pupil or family will be stigmatised because their experience, family structure, faith or beliefs differ from the school's teaching.

Our core commitment

RSHE will be faithful to the school's Christian character, inclusive of every pupil, respectful of parents, factually accurate and focused on helping children to be safe and to flourish.

2. Purpose of this policy

This policy explains the school's approach to Relationships Education, Health Education and primary sex education. It sets out what is taught, when and by whom; how teaching is made safe and accessible; how parents can view materials and take part in consultation; and the limited right to request withdrawal from additional sex education.

The policy applies to all pupils receiving primary education at Ridgeway Farm CE Academy, including pupils in the Early Years Foundation Stage where developmentally appropriate foundations are taught through Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Understanding the World.

3. Statutory and guidance framework

This policy has been prepared with regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Education Act 1996 and Education Act 2002;
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019;
- Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025, in effect from 1 September 2026);
- Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026;
- the National Curriculum for science, which the academy follows; and
- the Church of England Charter for Relationships, Sex and Health Education and related Church of England education guidance.

DfE statutory RSHE guidance | Church of England RSHE Charter

4. What is statutory and what the school additionally provides

Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory for pupils receiving primary education. Relevant science content is also part of the school's science curriculum. Primary sex education beyond those compulsory elements is not statutory; however, the 2026 guidance recommends that primary schools teach sex education in Year 5 and/or Year 6, including conception and birth.

Ridgeway Farm CE Academy has decided to provide a carefully defined programme of additional sex education in Years 5 and 6 through the Jigsaw "Changing Me" unit. This decision supports pupils' safety, prepares them for secondary education and enables them to receive accurate information within a trusted Christian school context rather than relying on peers or online sources.

Curriculum area	Status	Scope	Can parents withdraw?
Relationships Education	Compulsory	Families, caring friendships, respectful relationships, boundaries, online relationships and being safe.	No
Health Education	Compulsory	Physical and mental wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, basic first aid, changing adolescent body, puberty and menstruation.	No
Science	School curriculum	Human body parts, growth and development, life cycles and reproduction in plants and animals, with other science content taught in line with the school's science curriculum.	No
Additional sex education	School choice: Years 5 and 6	Human conception, including that sexual intercourse can lead to conception; pregnancy and birth; and a simple factual reference to IVF.	Yes - on written request

5. Aims

Through RSHE, pupils will be supported to:

- understand the features of loving, healthy and respectful relationships, within families, friendships and the wider community;
- recognise that families can look different while understanding that love, stability, commitment and care are central to family life;
- develop self-respect and respect for others as people made in the image of God;
- use correct vocabulary for body parts and understand privacy, consent, appropriate boundaries and that their body belongs to them;
- recognise unsafe, abusive, exploitative or controlling behaviour and know how and where to seek help;
- navigate online relationships and information safely and critically;
- understand physical and emotional changes, including puberty and menstruation, before they are likely to experience them;
- receive accurate, age-appropriate information about conception, pregnancy and birth;
- develop positive habits that support mental and physical health, and grow in character, wisdom, courage, kindness, honesty, responsibility and hope.

6. Curriculum organisation and Jigsaw

Jigsaw PSHE 3-11 is the school's principal programme for PSHE and RSHE. It provides a whole-school, spiral curriculum through six half-termly "puzzles":

- Being Me in My World
- Celebrating Difference
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me

- Relationships
- Changing Me

Jigsaw is a teaching resource, not the policy. The school remains responsible for deciding and checking what is taught. Staff adapt and supplement Jigsaw so that teaching meets current statutory guidance, the needs and maturity of pupils, safeguarding priorities, the school's Christian vision and this policy. Materials are reviewed before use and are not used simply because they appear in a published scheme.

7. The additional sex education programme

Additional sex education is taught only in Years 5 and 6. It is delivered by the class teacher or another suitably trained and familiar member of school staff, normally during the summer term as part of Jigsaw "Changing Me". Pupils will usually learn together. Small-group teaching or additional preparation may be used where this would support safety, dignity, SEND or emotional readiness; all pupils receive the same core entitlement unless withdrawn.

Year group	Additional sex education content	Context and approach
Year 5	A factual explanation that human conception occurs when a sperm fertilises an egg; how sexual intercourse allows sperm to enter the vagina and may lead to conception.	Taught using correct anatomical vocabulary, within discussion of loving, committed adult relationships, mutual respect, responsibility, privacy and readiness.
Year 6	A recap of conception; how a baby develops during pregnancy and is born; a simple factual explanation that some babies are conceived with medical help, such as IVF.	Taught as preparation for secondary education, alongside the responsibilities and loving care involved in bringing up a child. No explicit detail of sexual activity beyond what is needed to explain conception.

Important distinction

Correct anatomical names, body ownership, privacy, boundaries, healthy relationships, puberty and menstruation are taught through Relationships Education, Health Education and science and are not withdrawable. The specific Year 5 and Year 6 content explaining sexual intercourse, conception, pregnancy, birth and IVF is identified in advance as additional sex education and is withdrawable.

No additional sex education is planned below Year 5. If a Jigsaw resource for a younger year contains material that goes beyond the school's defined Relationships Education, Health Education or science content, staff will adapt or omit that element. Any proposed material change to the additional sex education programme will be communicated to and consulted on with parents before teaching.

8. Faith-sensitive and inclusive teaching

RSHE is taught within a Christian moral framework that is invitational and respectful, not shaming or moralistic. Staff will distinguish between:

- biological and medical facts;
- the law and statutory curriculum requirements;
- the school's Christian teaching and values; and
- issues on which people, families and faith communities may hold different views.

Where a distinctive Christian perspective is taught, staff will identify it as such. The school will not present contested opinions as established fact. Teaching about bodies and reproduction will be grounded in accurate biological knowledge. At the same time, no teaching will reinforce restrictive stereotypes about how girls or boys should look, behave, feel or learn.

Pupils will encounter a positive and age-appropriate range of family arrangements, which may include married parents, single parents, same-sex parents, adoptive and foster families, kinship carers, grandparents and blended families. The purpose is to ensure that every child can recognise that families may look different and that all pupils and families must be treated with dignity and respect. This is not the same as teaching the detail of adult sexual activity.

Teaching will comply with the Equality Act 2010. It will challenge prejudice, discrimination and bullying related to any protected characteristic. Primary teaching will be proportionate to pupils' age and will focus on respect, family life, safety and the experiences represented in the school community. Questions concerning sex and gender will be answered accurately, sensitively and in line with current statutory guidance, without encouraging stereotypes or presenting contested beliefs as fact.

9. Safe teaching and learning

RSHE is taught through a consistent, safe and participative approach. Teachers will:

- establish and revisit class ground rules, including listening respectfully and not asking personal questions of others;
- use correct, age-appropriate vocabulary and avoid euphemisms that could compromise safeguarding;
- make clear that pupils may pass on a question or speak privately to a trusted adult;
- use distancing techniques, scenarios and anonymous question boxes where appropriate;
- avoid inviting pupils to disclose personal or family experiences in front of the class;
- check understanding and address misconceptions without causing unreasonable alarm;
- signpost trusted sources of help and reinforce that abuse is never the victim's fault; and
- follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy if a concern or disclosure arises.

Confidentiality

Teachers will not promise confidentiality. If a pupil says something that suggests they or another child may be at risk, the member of staff will listen, reassure the pupil, avoid investigating, record the concern and report it promptly through the school's safeguarding procedures. Information will be shared only with those who need it to protect the child.

Managing questions

Pupils' questions will be treated with respect. Teachers will answer questions honestly and in an age-appropriate way when they fall within the planned curriculum. A teacher may defer a question, answer it individually, consult a senior leader or encourage discussion at home if a whole-class answer would be inappropriate, too personal or outside the planned primary curriculum. Staff will not provide false information or shame a child for asking. If a question indicates a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures take precedence.

Where a pupil has been withdrawn from additional sex education, staff will not deliberately reteach the withdrawn content in response to that pupil's question. They will, however, respond sufficiently to protect the pupil's safety and wellbeing and may contact the parent to agree how the question can best be addressed.

10. Working with parents and access to materials

Parents are the first educators of their children, and the school seeks a respectful partnership with them. The school will proactively engage and consult parents when this policy is developed or reviewed and when material changes are proposed.

Before the Year 5 and Year 6 additional sex education lessons, parents will receive information explaining the content, timing, learning objectives, vocabulary and right to request withdrawal. The school will offer an opportunity to discuss the teaching and, where possible, support parents in continuing conversations at home within their own faith and values.

The school will show parents a representative sample of planned RSHE resources and will make all curriculum materials available to view on request, subject to reasonable arrangements and copyright restrictions. Where copyright prevents electronic copies being distributed, parents will be offered an opportunity to view the material at school or through an appropriate presentation. Parents may comment on materials and policy; consultation does not give any individual parent a veto over statutory curriculum content.

The published RSHE curriculum map will be reviewed annually. If an emerging safeguarding issue requires teaching that differs materially from the published programme, the school will inform parents in advance wherever it is safe and practicable to do so and will make relevant materials available on request.

11. Parental right to request withdrawal

There is no right to withdraw a child from Relationships Education, Health Education or content taught as part of the science curriculum. This includes teaching about families, friendships, online safety, body ownership, correct anatomical vocabulary, puberty and menstruation.

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the additional sex education identified in section 7. At primary school, the Headteacher must grant the request. The process is:

1. The parent writes to the Headteacher, identifying the lesson or content from which withdrawal is requested.
2. The Headteacher offers to discuss the request, clarify what will be taught, hear the parent's concerns and explain the possible social and emotional effects of withdrawal. A meeting is encouraged but is not a condition of granting the request.
3. The decision and agreed arrangements are recorded. The request is granted for the identified additional sex education.
4. The pupil receives purposeful, appropriate education in a suitable setting during the lesson and is not made to feel punished or singled out.
5. The school checks the arrangement with the parent before later sex education lessons, because a parent may change their decision.

A withdrawal request does not prevent staff from responding to an immediate safeguarding concern or from teaching statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or science. Where the boundaries between curriculum areas may not be obvious, the school will explain them clearly to parents before teaching.

12. SEND, vulnerability and accessibility

RSHE is an entitlement for pupils with SEND and can be especially important because some pupils are more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, harmful sexual behaviour, bullying or misunderstanding social situations. The school will make reasonable adjustments without automatically removing essential safety content.

- Content may be broken into smaller steps, repeated and revisited more frequently.
- Staff may use visual supports, social narratives, concrete vocabulary, role play and pre-teaching.
- The pace, language and examples will be matched to pupils' communication, cognition, sensory needs and emotional development.
- Teaching may take place in a small group or individually when this is necessary to make learning accessible and safe.
- Staff will consult the SENCO, parents and relevant professionals where individual planning is needed.
- Adaptations will be recorded where they materially change how the curriculum is accessed.

Teachers will also consider pupils who have experienced bereavement, trauma, abuse, family separation, care or adoption, fertility issues within the family, or other circumstances that may make content particularly sensitive. Necessary support will be planned discreetly and no assumptions will be made about a pupil's experiences.

13. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Local Governing Body	Approves and reviews the policy; assures itself that statutory duties, equality obligations and the school's Christian character are upheld; holds leaders to account for implementation.
Headteacher	Ensures the policy is implemented; oversees consultation and withdrawal requests; ensures staffing, training and safeguarding arrangements are suitable; approves external providers and materials.
RSHE/PSHE subject leader	Maps Jigsaw and supplementary content to requirements; reviews resources; supports staff; communicates curriculum information; monitors teaching, progression and pupil experience.
Class teachers	Plan and deliver safe, age-appropriate lessons; adapt for need; answer questions appropriately; assess learning; follow safeguarding procedures and raise concerns.
SENCO and DSL team	Advise on accessibility, vulnerability, safeguarding, individual support and reasonable adjustments.
Parents	Engage with information and consultation; raise questions or concerns constructively; notify the Headteacher in writing if requesting withdrawal from additional sex education.
Pupils	Participate respectfully, observe class ground rules, seek help when needed and contribute age-appropriate feedback on the curriculum.

14. External visitors and resources

External visitors may enrich RSHE but do not replace the responsibility of the class teacher or school. Before any visitor works with pupils, the school will check their suitability, credentials, lesson plan and materials; clarify safeguarding and confidentiality arrangements; ensure the content fits this policy and the pupils' age and needs; and inform parents where appropriate. A member of school staff will remain present.

The school will not enter into arrangements that prevent parents from viewing materials used with their children. Resources will be checked for factual accuracy, age-appropriateness, accessibility, safeguarding value, equality, political impartiality and compatibility with the school's Christian ethos. Commercial branding or a provider's reputation will not replace professional scrutiny.

15. Assessment, monitoring and evaluation

Assessment in RSHE is formative and focused on knowledge, vocabulary, skills, attitudes and pupils' ability to identify help. Pupils are not assessed on personal beliefs or experiences. Monitoring may include planning and resource reviews, learning walks, work scrutiny, discussion with staff, pupil voice, parent feedback and governor oversight.

The subject leader will evaluate whether content is well sequenced, taught at the right time, accessible to all pupils and understood. Safeguarding patterns, local needs and pupil questions may inform curriculum review without disclosing confidential information. Any significant change to the defined additional sex education content will trigger parent engagement and, where appropriate, a review of this policy.

16. Concerns and complaints

Parents are encouraged to raise questions first with the class teacher or RSHE/PSHE subject leader. Concerns about curriculum content, resources, withdrawal or the application of this policy may be raised with the Headteacher. Formal complaints will be considered under the school's Complaints Policy. Safeguarding concerns should be reported immediately through the school's safeguarding arrangements.

17. Policy development, approval and review

This policy has been rewritten following review of the previous July 2025 policy, the statutory guidance in effect from 1 September 2026, the school's use of Jigsaw and its Church of England foundation. Before approval, the school will consult parents and take account of appropriate pupil, staff and governor views. The Local Governing Body approves the policy.

The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance, legislation, Church of England guidance, Jigsaw materials, safeguarding needs or the school's curriculum changes. It will be published on the school website and provided free of charge on request.

Appendix A. Curriculum overview by phase

This overview describes the planned progression. Detailed Jigsaw lesson objectives and the school's statutory mapping are maintained separately and shared with parents. Content is revisited through a spiral curriculum and is adapted to the needs and maturity of each cohort.

Phase/year	Relationships and health learning	Additional sex education
EYFS	Trusted adults, feelings, kindness, friendship, families, personal space, body awareness, privacy, growing and change through age-appropriate play and discussion.	No additional sex education.
Year 1	Belonging, caring families and friendships, similarities and differences, asking for help, safe/unsafe touch, correct names for external body parts, life cycles and growing.	No additional sex education.
Year 2	Trust, cooperation, bullying, boundaries and privacy, online safety foundations, gender stereotypes, body changes, growing older and animal life cycles.	No additional sex education.
Year 3	Family roles, friendship conflict, personal space, consent and saying no, online safety, healthy choices, body changes and an introduction to puberty and how babies need care.	No additional sex education; no explanation of sexual intercourse.
Year 4	Respectful relationships, peer pressure, online relationships, body image, puberty, menstruation, emotional changes and personal hygiene.	No additional sex education; no explanation of sexual intercourse.
Year 5	Healthy and unhealthy relationships, online safety, self-esteem and body image, puberty for all, menstruation and reproductive body changes.	Additional sex education: sperm and egg, fertilisation and how sexual intercourse may lead to conception.
Year 6	Respectful relationships, attraction and changing feelings, online safety, body image, puberty consolidation, transition and seeking help.	Additional sex education: conception, pregnancy and birth, including a simple factual reference to IVF.

Whole-school safeguarding threads

- Correct anatomical vocabulary, privacy, body ownership and appropriate boundaries;
- consent understood as asking, listening, respecting "no" and never pressuring another person;
- recognising unsafe or abusive behaviour, including online, and reporting concerns;
- knowing that unsafe contact or abuse is never the child's fault;
- identifying trusted adults and continuing to seek help until heard; and
- respecting difference and challenging prejudice, stereotypes and bullying.

Appendix B. Parent information and withdrawal request template

Parents may use the wording below or write in their own words. A request does not need to give a reason and will be granted for the school's additional primary sex education.

Suggested wording

Dear Headteacher,

I request that my child, _____ in Year _____, is withdrawn from the following additional sex education lesson(s): _____.

I understand that this does not include Relationships Education, Health Education or science, including puberty and menstruation.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

School record

Record item	Details
Request received	
Discussion offered/held	
Content covered by withdrawal	
Purposeful alternative education	
Parent confirmation	
Headteacher signature/date	