



Hurworth
School

Relationships and Sexual Health Policy

Approved by: Hurworth School LGB

Review frequency: 1 Year

Date of last review: September 2026

Date of next review: September 2027

Updated for the statutory guidance in force from 1 September 2026

1. Purpose and aims

Hurworth School provides high-quality, evidence-based relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) to help pupils make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, develop positive characteristics and recognise when something is not right.

- develop healthy, respectful relationships and understand consent, boundaries, kindness and care
- understand how to keep themselves and others safe, including online
- develop accurate knowledge about sexual and reproductive health and physical and mental wellbeing
- challenge prejudice, discrimination, misogyny and harmful stereotypes
- know how and where to seek help and report concerns

2. Statutory framework

As a secondary academy, Hurworth School provides Relationships and Sex Education to all pupils and Health Education as required by the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019. The school has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, revised in July 2025 and in force from 1 September 2026.

The school also has regard to its duties under the Education Act 1996, the Education Act 2002 and the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, and reads this policy alongside current statutory safeguarding guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education.

3. Policy development, publication and review

The school proactively engages and consults parents when developing and reviewing this policy and listens to pupil views so that provision reflects pupils' needs and is taught at an appropriate time. The policy is approved by the Board of Directors, published on the school website and provided free of charge on request. Parents will be informed of significant changes to provision that depart from the published policy.

4. Curriculum and delivery

RSHE is planned as a coherent, well-sequenced programme and is delivered principally through the school's Personal Development provision (IGNITE), with relevant statutory content also taught through subjects including science and religious studies. The curriculum

is responsive to school, local and national evidence and is adapted where necessary to pupils' age, developmental stage and needs.

By the end of secondary education, pupils are taught the statutory content within the following broad areas:

- families and committed relationships
- respectful relationships, including friendships, equality, stereotypes and power
- online safety and awareness, including AI-generated content, deepfakes, online sexual harassment and sextortion
- being safe, including consent, sexual harassment and violence, domestic abuse, exploitation, forced marriage, FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health, contraception, pregnancy choices, STIs and access to support
- health and wellbeing, including mental wellbeing, physical health, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, health protection, personal safety, first aid and developing bodies

Applicable law is taught factually and accurately where relevant. The curriculum makes clear the distinction between relationships education and sex education so that parents understand which content is subject to the right to request withdrawal. Detailed curriculum sequencing is published separately and reviewed more frequently than this policy.

5. Inclusion, equality and SEND

RSHE is inclusive and accessible to all pupils. Teaching complies with the Equality Act 2010 and does not discriminate against, or harass, pupils. Pupils learn about equality, respect and the protected characteristics by the end of secondary education. Teaching about sexual orientation and gender reassignment is integrated appropriately into the programme, with facts and the law taught accurately and contested views not presented as fact.

Reasonable adjustments and appropriate differentiation are made for pupils with SEND. Staff recognise that some pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to abuse, exploitation, bullying and harmful sexual behaviour, and provision is adapted accordingly while maintaining high expectations.

6. Safe teaching and safeguarding

RSHE is taught in a safe, supportive environment by staff who understand safeguarding procedures and how to respond to disclosures. Staff do not promise confidentiality and follow the school's safeguarding procedures whenever a concern arises. Sensitive or specialised topics are taught using accurate, age-appropriate material and, where appropriate, specialist advice or support.

Questions are answered honestly, factually and in an age-appropriate way. If a question is inappropriate for the lesson, relates to sex education from which a pupil has been withdrawn, or raises a safeguarding concern, staff will respond in accordance with this policy and safeguarding procedures rather than leaving the pupil to seek potentially unsafe information elsewhere.

7. Resources, parents and external providers

The school is transparent with parents about RSHE. Parents are informed about what is taught and can view all curriculum materials used to teach RSHE on request. The school will also make a representative sample of planned resources available to parents. Copyright may affect how materials are shared but will not be used as a reason to refuse access.

Any external organisation or visitor supplements rather than replaces teaching by the school. Hurworth School remains responsible for the content and delivery. Before use, the school checks the provider's credentials, lesson plans and materials to ensure they are accurate, unbiased, age and stage appropriate, accessible, consistent with this policy and statutory guidance, and suitable for pupils' needs. Safeguarding and confidentiality arrangements are agreed in advance, and materials used by external providers must be viewable by parents.

8. Roles and responsibilities

Board of Directors

Approves this policy and holds the Headteacher to account for its implementation, including ensuring that curriculum content and materials align with statutory guidance, provision is accessible to pupils with SEND, and parents receive clear information.

Headteacher

Ensures RSHE is taught consistently, oversees arrangements for parental requests for withdrawal and ensures appropriate access to curriculum materials. Day-to-day leadership is delegated to the Director of Personal Development.

Director of Personal Development

Natalie Douglass, Director of Personal Development, leads the planning, sequencing, implementation, monitoring and review of RSHE and supports staff to deliver it effectively.

Staff

- deliver RSHE sensitively, accurately and inclusively
- model respectful behaviour and challenge prejudice and harmful stereotypes
- adapt teaching to pupils' needs and monitor learning
- follow safeguarding procedures and respond appropriately to questions and disclosures
- undertake relevant training and raise concerns about delivery with senior leaders

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage appropriately and treat others with respect and sensitivity during RSHE.

9. Parents' right to request withdrawal from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education, health education or content taught as part of the science curriculum, including science content related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Requests should be made in writing to the Headteacher. Before deciding a request, the Headteacher will normally discuss it with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil, to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and consider the pupil's circumstances. In secondary education, a request may be refused in exceptional circumstances, for example where there are safeguarding concerns or a pupil has a specific vulnerability. The discussion and decision will be recorded.

From three terms before a pupil turns 16, the pupil may choose to receive sex education despite a parental request for withdrawal. The school will ensure pupils know about this right. Any pupil withdrawn from sex education will receive appropriate, purposeful education during that time.

10. Monitoring, evaluation and training

The Director of Personal Development monitors and evaluates RSHE through appropriate quality assurance, including review of curriculum sequencing and resources, pupil feedback, learning evidence and staff feedback. Assessment is used to identify where pupils require additional support or intervention. Findings inform curriculum improvement.

Staff receive appropriate training to deliver RSHE safely and effectively, including safeguarding and responding to disclosures. Further support or specialist training is provided when sensitive or specialised content requires it.

11. Related school policies and guidance

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy / SEN Information Report
- Equality information and objectives
- Online Safety / Acceptable Use arrangements
- Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance

Appendix: Request for withdrawal from sex education within RSE

Parents may use this form or provide the same information in writing to the Headteacher.

Pupil name	
Year / tutor group	
Parent/carers name	
Date	
Sex education content from which withdrawal is requested	
Information you would like the school to consider	

Parent/carers signature: _____ Date: _____

School record

Date of discussion	
Decision and agreed actions	
Headteacher / delegate	