



PLYMOUTH COLLEGE

RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Including Early Years Foundation Stage

Last reviewed:	June 2026
Next review date:	August 2027
Responsibility:	Assistant Head (Pupil Welfare)

Definition, rationale and ethos

Plymouth College believes that the education our pupils receive should prepare them for all the challenges and opportunities that adult life affords and ensure that every individual has the knowledge, tools and skills to be successful, productive and happy members of society. Pupils need to be equipped to make informed decisions about their well being, health and relationships, to exercise resilience in the face of adversity and to access reliable support and information.

Our Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum is underpinned by this ethos, and it is structured in such a way as to develop the necessary knowledge and skills in an age-appropriate way over time. We aim for the curriculum to be inclusive, respectful to different people's beliefs and perspectives, to advocate for respect and tolerance, and to be appropriate to different ages and abilities across the School. Children and young people will be supported to cultivate positive personal characteristics and to prevent harm by recognising and understanding when things are not right.

This policy pays due respect to the [statutory guidance](#) issued by the DfE for first teaching in September 2026.

RSE is delivered by form tutors to tutor groups and closely links with our PSHE curriculum. The [PPD policy](#) details this further.

Roles and Responsibilities

Management board	Reviews and approves the RSE policy.
Head	Ensures the policy is implemented and that RSE is delivered effectively. Consults with parents who wish to withdraw their child(ren) from sex education in the Senior School.

PSHE/RSE co-ordinator	Oversees curriculum planning and schemes of work. Delivers staff training. Monitors the effectiveness of RSE lessons. Collates feedback from pupils, parents and staff about the RSE curriculum.
Heads of Year in the Senior School and Head of Prep	Ensures suitable learning resources are available for RSE lessons.
Form tutors	Deliver RSE in line with the policy and school values.

Relationship Education (RE) in the Prep School

The focus of RE is to equip pupils with the building blocks to form positive relationships of all kinds, and to support them to grow into kind, caring adults who have respect for others and know how to keep themselves and others safe. They will be given age appropriate teaching about recognising abusive behaviours (including online) and where to report concerns and seek advice.

The themes covered include families and people who care, caring friendships, respectful, kind relationships, online safety and awareness and being safe.

Given how fundamental these skills are throughout life and how positive relationships contribute to overall well being, there is no right to withdraw from RE. However, there will be some lessons delivered on sex education in Key Stage 2 that are not part of the compulsory curriculum. Parents will be informed when these lessons are about to occur, the teaching resources shared with them and advice given on how to broach these topics at home. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from these lessons, and information will be given on how to do this.

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) in the Senior School

The focus of RSE is to equip young people with the information they need to develop and sustain healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, including intimate ones. It also includes the knowledge they need later in life to keep themselves and others safe. The aim of RSE is to focus on respect for others, confidence and self-esteem so that young people are enabled to make their own choices about whether or when to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, once they reach the age of consent.

The themes covered include families, respectful relationships (including friendships), online safety and awareness, being safe and intimate and sexual relationships (including sexual health). These topics will be taught in an interactive way that allows pupils to develop critical evaluation skills about complex relationship scenarios.

All pupils are required to receive relationship education, but parents do have the right to request their child be withdrawn from sex education, details of which can be found below.

Relationships education: focuses on building healthy, respectful relationships of all types.

Sex education: focuses on human reproduction, sexual health, intimate and sexual relationships.

RE and RSE curriculum content and delivery

Schemes of work and lesson materials are up-to-date and evidence-based resources. The lessons are carefully sequenced to develop and build on knowledge and skills over time. They can be found through these links, which are also shared with parents at the start of the academic year and on the [parents' welfare noticeboard](#):

[EYFS \(3-5 years\)](#)

[Key Stage 1 \(5-7 years\)](#)

[Key Stage 2 \(7-11 years\)](#)

[Key Stage 3 \(11-14 years\)](#)

[Key Stage 4 \(14-16 years\)](#)

[Key Stage 5 \(16-18 years\)](#)

In the Prep School, RE is delivered as part of PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) lessons by their form tutors. This is a timetabled lesson once a week.

In the Senior School, RSE is delivered through PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic education) lessons which are delivered by form tutors as part of PPD time. There are also some collapsed timetable sessions for the delivery of PSHE, including RSE.

Any external providers delivering RSE are fully vetted using our [visiting speakers](#) policy.

As lessons are delivered by form tutors, teachers are familiar with pupils' individual needs and so can adjust materials accordingly to ensure they are accessible to all. Given that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to experiencing harmful and abusive behaviours, RSE is particularly important. Form tutors can use the SEND information on iSAMs and liaise with the SENCo to ensure they have taken into account the needs of their pupils.

The Heads of Year and Assistant Head (pupil welfare) monitor the quality of PSHE lessons, and in consultation with pupils, staff and parents, and by reviewing CPOMs and R&R logs, evaluate its effectiveness and relevance. There is capacity in our assembly programme to be responsive to emerging needs of the community and to supplement our PSHE curriculum.

Assessment of PSHE is informal, occurs in lessons and typically happens through pupils having the opportunity to reflect upon what they've learned and how it impacts their lives.

Should a pupil ask a question which goes beyond the scope of the lesson or relates to a part of sex education from which they have been withdrawn, teachers are trained to explain that they are unable to answer that question themselves. At an appropriate point in or just after the lesson, the pupil will then be directed to a reputable source of information (such as their parents, a trusted adult, reputable online websites and other support services) who would be able to provide the answers they are looking for. The pupil will be reminded that not all sources of information are trustworthy or reliable.

Parental involvement

All materials used in PSHE lessons are available to parents through the [parents' welfare noticeboard](#). This will support parents to know what is being taught each week and therefore to be able to continue conversations at home.

Parents are consulted annually on the PSHE content, and this informs future planning and review of this policy.

Parents of pupils up to Year 11 have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from the sex education aspects of RSE (other than those within the National Curriculum science). The Head will discuss any such request with parents to understand concerns and explain the benefits of the curriculum. The Head will also discuss with parents the benefits of this education and the potential disadvantages of withdrawal, including the social and emotional impact of being excluded and the likelihood that the child hears a peer version rather than the teacher's explanation. A record is kept of anyone making such a request.

After these discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect a parental request to withdraw a child up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education, the school will arrange for them to do so during one of those terms.

Teaching about the law

There will be a range of opinions regarding some topics in RSE, and respectful debate is to be taught and encouraged. However, the starting principle should be that applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.

Equality

Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics by the end of their secondary education. Teachers will ensure that RSE is taught in a way that complies with the Equality Act 2010 and that does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender content

Pupils should understand the importance of equality and respect throughout their education.

In the Prep School, pupils are taught about healthy loving relationships, and same-sex parents are included with other family arrangements when discussing families.

In the Senior School, there should be equal opportunity to explore the features of stable and healthy same sex relationships, that is integrated into the full RSE curriculum rather than being delivered in a stand alone lesson. All facts about sexual health are taught in a way that is relevant for all pupils, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or gender questioning.

Pupils are taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment, and to recognise that people with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment have protection from discrimination and should be treated with respect and dignity.

When teaching this, the School is mindful that beyond the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment there is significant debate, we encourage children and young people to

express their views while remaining respectful to others. Bullying, harassment, disrespectful language and behaviour are never tolerated.

Religion and belief

RSE is taught in a way that is sensitive to the religious backgrounds of pupils, inline with the Equality Act 2010.

Pupils are encouraged to share their opinions and beliefs, and to respect and celebrate the differences between us. Balanced, respectful debate is enabled in PSHE lessons, but bullying, harassment, disrespectful language and behaviour are never tolerated.

Safeguarding

RE and RSE can cover sensitive content, leading to increased safeguarding reports. All staff are trained to identify signs of concern and how to handle disclosures in line with our [Safeguarding and Child Protection policy](#).

Visiting speakers and external agencies are briefed on our safeguarding procedures should any safeguarding concerns arise.

Pupils are also educated on the importance of confidentiality and anonymity when contributing to discussion during RSE and PSHE lessons, and also receive information on where to seek help if any of the content has troubled them.