



Dorchester Middle School

RSHE Policy: Years 5 - 8

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Statement of Intent

This policy covers **Dorchester Middle School's** whole-school approach to Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE). We believe that RSHE is vital for the personal, social, and emotional development of our pupils. It equips students with the information, skills, and values they need to have safe, respectful, and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their health, physical, and mental wellbeing. At Dorchester Middle School, we believe that all students have a right to holistic, inclusive, and needs-led RSHE. Through providing high-quality RSHE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school, which include ready, original, ambitious, safe and respectful, and demonstrate our commitment to equality and the celebration of difference. The teaching of RSHE also helps to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life. It supports the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental, and physical development of pupils both at school and in the wider society.

At Dorchester Middle School we have an obligation to provide our pupils with high-quality, evidence-based, and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how our RSHE curriculum is organised and delivered to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils. This policy was created in consultation with our staff, board of governors, pupils, and parents. We will ensure that it is effectively communicated to all stakeholders, including by publishing it on our school website.

Equality, Inclusion and Social Justice

We believe that RSHE is a key vehicle for promoting equality, inclusion and social justice. Our RSHE is designed to promote gender equality through challenging gender stereotypes and gender expectations in schools and wider society. We take these issues seriously and ensure that we embed content on gender equality throughout the curriculum. We are also committed to an RSHE that makes every pupil feel valued and included and is relevant to them. This means we are committed to an LGBTQ+ inclusive and SEND inclusive curriculum and are mindful of the SEND Code of Practice 2015 when planning for this subject. We will also ensure that we consider the religious and cultural background of all pupils when teaching RSHE. Therefore, will seek to challenge all forms of discrimination and prejudice between pupils and promote understanding and respect as outlined under the Equality Act 2010

1. Legal framework

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

- Equality Act 2010
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2022) 'Keeping children safe in education 2022'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: science programmes of study'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-child Abuse Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the RSHE curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND
- Ensuring RSHE is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligation
- Creating and keeping up-to-date a separate written statement of this policy and ensuring the statement is published on the school's website and provided free of charge to anyone who requests it.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy
- Ensuring parents are fully informed of this policy.
- Reviewing all requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory elements of the RSHE curriculum.
- Discussing withdrawal requests with parents, and the pupil if appropriate, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, including the benefits of receiving the education.
- Ensuring withdrawn pupils receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

- Encouraging parents to be involved in consultations regarding reviews of the school's RSHE curriculum.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy and the curriculum.

The RSHE subject leader will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of RSHE.
- Providing clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Working closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the RSHE curriculum complements, and does not duplicate, the content covered in other curriculum subjects.
- Ensuring the curriculum is age-appropriate and of high quality.
- Reviewing changes to the RSHE curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RSHE, providing support to staff where necessary.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression between each year group.
- Helping to develop colleagues' expertise in the subject.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSHE.
- Leading staff meetings.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the headteacher.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSHE curriculum.
- Promoting knowledge and awareness of safeguarding issues amongst staff.
- Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a pupil that have arisen through the teaching of RSHE.

Subject teachers will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with, and promoting, this policy.
- Delivering RSHE in a manner that is sensitive, of high quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of appropriate teaching methods and resources are used to cover the content.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE.
- Liaising with the SENDCO to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND. Liaising with the RSHE subject leader on key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring pupil progress in RSHE.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of RSE or health education to the RSHE subject leader or a member of the SLT.

- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the DSL.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents have requested to withdraw them from the non-statutory components of RSE, by providing them with alternative education opportunities.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs.
- Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

3. Organisation of the RSHE curriculum

For the purpose of this policy:

- “**RSHE**” is used to refer to the overall programme of relationships, sex and health education.
- “**RSE**” refers to relationships and sex education and is defined as teaching pupils about developing healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, and helping them to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- “**Health education**” is defined as teaching pupils about how they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, and how physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

The RSHE curriculum has been developed, and will be monitored and reviewed, in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations.

We will gather the views of teachers, pupils and parents in the following ways:

- Questionnaires
- Meetings
- Letters

The majority of the RSHE curriculum is delivered through PSHE education. The RSHE subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

The school will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance at all times.

The school will consider the context and views of the wider local community when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of circumstances in the local area. The religious background of all pupils will also be considered when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

The RSHE curriculum will be informed by topical issues in the school and wider community, to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs.

4. RSE subject overview

Key Stage Two

All RSHE content is clearly mapped and integrated into our PSHE curriculum, using resources from the Kapow PSHE platform. Parents are kept fully informed of the content being taught through teacher information evenings at the start of the academic year, as well as email updates prior to lessons.

Please see below for the National Curriculum statements and the timeline for when these are taught to our pupils.

Year 5 – Coverage of PSHE topics by term

Autumn term	
1	To understand and explain rules which can help everyone feel safe in PSHE
2	Build a friend – to understand how to form and maintain positive relationships.
3	Friendship skills – To explore the ups and downs of friendship
4	Marriage – To understand the concept of marriage
5	Family life – To being to understand that family relationship can sometimes make children feel unhappy and what they can do if this happens
6	Stereotyping – to recognise how attitudes to gender have changed over time
7	Stereotyping – Race and religion – To explore the impact of stereotype and how they can lead to discrimination

Spring Term	
1	Online Friendships – To begin to understand some issues related to online friendships including the impact of their actions
2	Staying safe online – to learn about staying safe online.
3	Alcohol, drugs and tobacco – making decisions -To begin to understand the influence others have on us and how we can make our own decisions.
4	Puberty – To understand physical changes during puberty
5	Emotional changes in puberty – To understand emotional changes in puberty.

6	Menstruation – To understand the menstrual cycle
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Summer Term	
1	Breaking the law– To begin to understand what happens when the law is broken
2	Rights and responsibilities – to explore the links between rights and responsibilities
3	Contributing to society – To understand how we recognise and value the contribution people make to the community
4	Pressure Groups – To recognise the role of pressure groups
5	Parliament – To begin to understand how parliament works
6	First aid – Bleeding. TO understand how to help someone who is bleeding
7	Sun safety – How to keep safe in the sun.

Year 6 – Coverage of PSHE topics by term

Autumn term	
1	To understand and explain rules which can help everyone feel safe in PSHE
2	Respect – How this can be gained and lost
3	Developing respectful relationships – TO understand that respect is a two way and how we treat others is how we can expect to be treated
4	Challenging stereotypes – To explore other people’s attitudes and ideas and to begin to challenge these
5	The risks of alcohol – to begin to understand the risks of alcohol
6	Social Media – To understand that online relationships should be treated in the same way as face to face relationships.
7	Being critical digital consumers – How to be sage online? What does lock it, block, show it, tell it mean?

Spring Term	
1	Physical and emotional changes in puberty – To understand the changes that happen during puberty
2	Conception – To understand the biology of conception (<i>parent/carers have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson</i>)
3	Pregnancy and birth – To understand the development of the baby during pregnancy (<i>Parents and carers have the right to withdraw their child from this lesson</i>)
4	Habits – positive and negative – To understand how habits can be good and bad for our health
5	Human rights – To understand human rights, including the right to an education.
6	First aid – Choking.

Summer Term	
1	To learn basic life support
2	Prejudice and discrimination – To recognise prejudice and discrimination and learn how to be challenged
3	Valuing diversity – To understand diversity and the value different people bring to a community
4	National Democracy – To begin to understand how government works
5	Gambling – To begin to understand the risks associated with gambling
6	What is identity? - To understand what factors contribute to identity
7	Identity and body image – To understand the media manipulate images

Key Stage Three

At Key Stage Three each year group receives age-appropriate and developmentally suitable content. We are committed to supporting all pupils in staying safe, and our PSHE curriculum clearly outlines what constitutes healthy and unhealthy relationships.

Respect—one of our core school values—is embedded throughout RSHE discussions, with a focus on permission-seeking and giving, appropriate and inappropriate contact, kindness, and commitment.

All RSHE content is clearly mapped and integrated into our PSHE curriculum, using resources from the PSHE Foundation platform. Parents are kept fully informed of the content being taught through teacher information evenings at the start of the academic year, as well as email updates prior to lessons.

Please see below for areas of study and the timeline for when these are taught to our pupils.

PSHE – Key Stage 3 Long term plan.

	Autumn one	Autumn Two	Spring one	Spring two	Summer one	Summer Two
Year 7	Economic wellbeing Evaluating value for money; Debt, fraud and personal values around finance; Financial exploitation	Healthy lifestyles Physically and mentally healthy lifestyles; Healthy sleep habits; Dental health; Managing stress; Accessing health services	Substances Facts, misconceptions and social norms regarding drugs, alcohol and tobacco; Influence and risks relating to substance use	Careers Developing enterprise skills; The world of work and young people's employment rights	Relationships Healthy and positive relationships, including intimate relationships; Expectations and stereotypes in relationships; Managing strong feelings; The concept of consent	Friendships and diversity Respectful relationships and conflict resolution, including online; Equality, diversity and tackling prejudice; Bullying, including online
	Autumn one	Autumn Two	Spring one	Spring two	Summer one	Summer Two
Year 8	Careers: Life and career aspirations, Personal strengths and skills for employment. Stereotypes: routes into careers,	Friendships and Managing influences Managing social influence, peer pressure and peer approval. Strategies to manage pressure	Relationships Stereotypes and expectations of gender roles, behaviour and intimacy. Consent in intimate	First aid and keeping safe First aid including CPR and defibrillator use. Personal safety including travel safety.	Mental Health and well being Attitudes to mental health and emotional wellbeing. Digital resilience: Body image. Health and unhealthy coping	Moving forward Personal strengths, celebrating successes and setting goals. Moving onto a new school

	Progression routes: Online presence.	to conform within a group and in relation to substance use.	situations: introduction to contraception and sexual health.		strategies. Seeking support from themselves and others.	Managing change.
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6. Delivery of the curriculum

Through effective organisation and delivery of the RSHE, the school will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSHE complement several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

The RSHE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

The curriculum will proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupil's physical, emotional and sexual development. RSHE will be delivered in a non-judgemental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.

Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

The school will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSHE curriculum this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson (although an assembly during pride month will be given to all year groups) LGBTQ+ content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate and factual way that allows pupils to explore gender identity and the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships.

All pupils are expected to learn about LGBTQ+ content, and parents do not have a statutory right to withdraw their children from lessons that include LGBTQ+ content.

The curriculum will be designed to focus on pupils of all gender identities and expressions and activities will be planned to ensure all are actively involved.

The school will ensure it delivers teaching on sensitive topics, e.g. the body, in a way that is appropriate and sensitive to the various needs of the school community, e.g. cultural background.

All teaching and resources will be assessed by the RSHE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any SEND, if applicable. Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected

with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils. Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the school's Online Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings, and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly. Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.

Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships, including marriage, when teaching RSE, though sensitivity will always be given as to not stigmatise pupils on the basis of their home circumstances. In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how, will be planned in conjunction with parents.

The procedures for assessing pupil progress are outlined in [section 15](#) of this policy.

7. Curriculum links

The school will seek opportunities to draw links between RSHE and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. RSHE will be linked to the following subjects:

- **Science** – pupils are taught about the main external male parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows, including puberty.
- **PE** – pupils can develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead healthy, active lives.
- **PSHE** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values and characteristics of individuals.
- **Computing lessons** – keeping safe online.

8. Working with parents

The school understands that parents' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships, sex and health is vital and will, therefore, engage parents as far as possible in their children's learning. This will include providing parents with frequent opportunities to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSHE.

The school will consult closely with parents when reviewing the content of the school's RSHE curriculum and will be given regular opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns. 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 the schools to make.

When in consultation with parents, the school will provide:

- The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
- Examples of the resources the school intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSHE.

The school will remain aware that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. If parents have concerns regarding RSHE, they will submit these to the school office who will refer this to the PSHCE lead.

9. Working with external agencies

Working with external agencies will be used to enhance our delivery of RSHE and bring in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSHE curriculum but will be expected to comply with the provisions of this policy.

When working with external agencies, the school will:

- Check the visitor credentials of all external agencies.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the external experts fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this policy.
- Discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure the content is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils.
- Agree with the agency on how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports must be dealt with in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The school will use visitors to enhance teaching by an appropriate member of teaching staff, not to replace teaching by those staff.

10. Withdrawal from lessons

The school will always recognise that parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. The school will uphold that parent do not have a right to withdraw their child from the relationships or health elements of the programmes.

Requests to withdraw a child from sex education will be made in writing to the headteacher.

Before granting a withdrawal request, the headteacher/ Deputy headteacher/subject lead or SEND lead will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the pupil, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The headteacher will inform parents of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have. All discussions with parents will be documented. These records will be kept securely in the school office in line with the school's Records Management Policy.

Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the pupil with RSE.

Pupils who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.

For requests concerning the withdrawal of a pupil with SEND, the headteacher will take the pupils' specific needs into account when making their decision.

11. Equality and accessibility

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief
- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

The school will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its pupils and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with the above protected characteristics.

The school will design the RSHE curriculum to be inclusive of all pupils. The school will be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to their characteristics, e.g. SEND or being LGBTQ+. Teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the SENCO and be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to pupils with SEND.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of pupils at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between all pupils and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and managed promptly. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the school's Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

12. Safeguarding and confidentiality

All pupils will be taught about keeping themselves safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum.

To meet DfE's best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation of safeguarding-related areas of the curriculum, as the knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive for pupils of all ages, e.g. self-harm or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging, or providing instructions to, pupils. Teaching of these subjects will always prioritise preventing harm to pupils as a central goal.

Confidentiality within the classroom will be an important component of RSHE, and teachers will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible, in compliance with the school's Pupil Confidentiality Policy.

Teachers will, however, understand that some aspects of RSHE may lead to a pupil raising a safeguarding concern, e.g. disclosing that they are being abused, and that if a disclosure is made, the DSL will be alerted immediately. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled – this includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

13. Assessment

The school will have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSHE as for other curriculum areas. Lessons will be planned to provide suitable challenge to pupils of all abilities.

Teaching will be assessed and assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. There are no formal examinations for RSHE; however, to assess pupil outcomes, the school will capture progress in the following ways:

- Summative assessments around key vocabulary used within units of work each term.
- Self-evaluations or self-reflection from pupils seen within work as well as verbally feedback to the teacher.

14. Monitoring and review

The RSHE subject leader and the leadership team will be responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning for the subject. They will conduct subject assessments on a termly basis, which will include a mixture of the following

- Lesson visits
- Subject reviews
- Work scrutiny by subject lead and the Senior Leadership Team
- Formative and summative assessments

The RSHE subject leader will work regularly and consistently with the headteacher and RSHE link governor, e.g. through regular review meetings, to evaluate the effectiveness of the subjects and implement any changes.

This policy will be reviewed by the headteacher in conjunction with the RSHE subject leader on an annual basis.

Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programmes, will be implemented by the headteacher. Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff and, where necessary, parents and pupils, involved in the RSHE curriculum.

The next scheduled review date for this policy will be September 2026.