CANBURY SCHOOL

RELATIONSHIPS, HEALTH AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Last Review Date:	**June 2026**
Policy Owner:	**W Rush**
Approved by:	**Dr E Waites (Safeguarding Governor)**
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1. Aims

The aims of relationships, health and sex education (RHSE) at Canbury school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

2. Statutory requirements

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, as well as strategies for building self-efficacy. They will need to develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.

In response to this, the Government made compulsory, from September 2020: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (for teaching until 31 August 2026)

- Relationships Education for all students receiving **primary** education (there is no parental right to withdraw students)
- Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving **secondary** education (subject to a limited parental right to withdraw students from the Sex Education components up to three terms before the child turns 16. Parents will not, however, be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education).

The Government also made Health Education compulsory in all maintained schools from 2020. At Canbury School, as an independent school, our comprehensive **Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE)** programme ensures we meet and exceed the objectives of statutory Health Education.

At Canbury, the Sex Education component is one small part of a much wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) programme. The mandatory delivery of Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), from 2020, enhances our provision and helps support young people to develop resilience; to know how and when to ask for help; and to know where to access support.

We also have due regard in this policy to:
The Independent School Standards Guidance for Independent Schools April 2026 para 1.35 to 1.43, reflecting standard 2A.

With the release of the new RSHE statutory guidance in July (2025) this policy will be reviewed and adjusted accordingly for the guidance to become compulsory in September 2026.
Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK

3. Policy development
This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and families. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – Assistant Head (Pastoral) pulled together all relevant information, including relevant national and local guidance

2. Staff consultation – all school staff given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations

3. Students, parent/family, stakeholder consultation – students, parents/families and any interested parties given the opportunity to look at the policy and share feedback

4. Amendments - Assistant Head (Pastoral) & Headteacher to make any amendments which are seen as important

5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

4. Definition

RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, **mental health and emotional wellbeing**, diversity and personal identity.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSHE is **not** about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum
Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

6. Delivery of RSHE
RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum.

From time to time students may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional in Key Stage 4 and 5

RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about the content of our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

7. Equality and Inclusion
We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them

- Is sensitive to all students' experiences

During lessons, makes students feel:

- Safe and supported
- Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
    - A whole-class setting
    - Small groups or targeted sessions
    - 1-to-1 discussions
    - Digital formats
    - Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

We are alive to issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes, take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours.

All staff have a duty to foster good relationships and ensure compliance with the Prevent Duty.

The teaching of relationships and sex education emphasises the need for understanding of a variety of relationships and encourages respect for other people, with particular regard to the protected characteristics set out in the Equality Act 2010. The protected characteristics as listed in section 4 of the Equality Act 2010 are as follows: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

We aim to teach Relationships Education and Relationships & Sex Education in an age and developmentally appropriate way, taking account of the age of students and their learning abilities. We recognise our duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and **foster good relations** between different groups, particularly those with protected characteristics.

8. Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress
- Promoting inclusive language and diversity

9. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:

- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with students' developmental stage
- Comply with:
    - This policy
    - The Teachers' Standards
    - The Equality Act 2010
    - The Human Rights Act 1998
    - The Education Act 1996
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
    - What they're going to say
    - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Empowering classroom teachers with the explicit authority and mandatory duty to immediately intervene and terminate any external presentation or session if a guest speaker departs from the pre-approved curriculum plan, promotes partisan political views, or introduces materials that conflict with fundamental British values or the Staff Code of Conduct. To prevent these live interventions, the Assistant Head (Pastoral) /

DSL must comprehensively review, pre-screen, and log all external presentation assets before the speaker enters the classroom, ensuring that no unvetted digital files or external web platforms are introduced to students.

- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- We **won't**, under any circumstances:
    - Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
    - Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

10. Roles and responsibilities

10.1 The governing board
The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Assistant Head (Pastoral) to account for its implementation.

10.2 The Assistant Head (Pastoral)
The Assistant Head (Pastoral) is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school.

10.3 Staff
Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Assistant Head (Pastoral).

Teaching Staff 2025 to 2026

Year 7, 8 PSHE & RSE - Mr Fayers
Year 9, 10 and 11 PSHE & RSE - Mr McGregor (Head of Key Stage 4)
Year 12 & Year 13 PSHE & RSE - Mr Hussain (Head of Key Stage 5)
Year 7 and Year 8 Wellbeing – Miss Chorazyczewska (Mental Health Lead)

10.4 Students
Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

11. Parents' right to withdraw
Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. The lessons this relates to are highlighted in the table below.

Requests for student withdrawal from the non-science components of sex education must be submitted in writing using the form provided in Appendix 3 and addressed directly to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher maintains ultimate statutory accountability for reviewing and granting these requests. Operationally, the Headteacher and the Assistant Head (Pastoral) will jointly meet with the parents or carers to discuss the request, outline the protective benefits of the curriculum, ensure the student's wishes are considered, and agree upon alternative supervised educational arrangements. A formal written record of this decision will be placed on the student's confidential educational record, and the Assistant Head (Pastoral) will oversee the operational deployment of alternative work.

12. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and PSHE teaching requirements, and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

We may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

13. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Assistant Head (Pastoral) and Head through:

- Learning walks
- Yearly review meetings
- Book/work scrutiny
- Staff meetings
- Heads of Year meetings

Students' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems and also through the use of anonymous questionnaires.

This policy will be reviewed and updated **annually** by the Assistant Head (Pastoral) **(Mr Rush)** and ratified by the Governing Board.

Appendix 1: Curriculum overview

The following resource highlights when and what element of relationships and sex education is taught within Canbury School's curriculum. These lessons are most often covered in PSHE and Science lessons. We also may at times decide to cover additional topics if we observe that there is a need or trend in a particular year group that has been identified.

PSHE/RSE September 2025 curriculum overview

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school, students should know:

Topic	Students should know:
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) include: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
Online and media	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations

	of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	• How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Source:
These expectations are set out in the Department for Education's guidance for schools on relationships education, RSE and health education.

Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSHE

To be completed by parents/carers

Name of child		Year	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

To be completed by Canbury School

Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers	*Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.* *Eg: Joe Bloggs will be taking part in all relationships lessons and during the sex education lessons, he will be working independently on a project in the Year 7 classroom*