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Relationships, Sex, and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Rationale and Ethos

The RSHE curriculum is an essential component of a child's education, designed to equip students with the knowledge, skills and values to navigate life confidently and responsibly. It supports their emotional and physical development, while fostering respectful relationships and personal well-being.

At Grampian, the RSHE curriculum is carefully designed to:

- Promote student’s emotional literacy by helping students to articulate feelings and emotions and develop empathy.
- Understand and establish healthy relationships by encouraging respect, kindness, and understanding of boundaries.
- Support personal safety by teaching students how to stay safe online and offline.
- Cultivate resilience by building coping strategies to manage life’s challenges, including mental health awareness.
- Prepare for and recognise change by supporting students to understand bodily changes and transitions, especially during puberty.

RSHE is embedded across the curriculum and nurtured through the school’s ethos, assemblies, and pastoral care. It is inclusive of all students, regardless of background or identity, and is delivered in a safe environment, which is mindful of students’ age and developmental stage.

The school recognises parents and carers as key partners in RSHE education. We strive for transparent communication and offer opportunities for families to engage with the curriculum and raise concerns or suggestions.

Aims

The aims of relationships, **sex**, and health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of students at the school and of society.
- Prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of later life.
- Provide knowledge and information which is inclusive and meets the needs of all our students (and their families) including those with protected characteristics.
- Create a positive culture around issues of self-esteem and confidence, relationships and sexuality ensuring gender and LGBT+ equality.
- Help students develop and understand their feelings, behaviours, and emotions and those of others so they can lead fulfilling and enjoyable lives.
- Provide students with the right tools to enable them to seek information and support (both within and outside school) should they need it.

- Help students to develop skills (language, decision making, choice, assertiveness), promoting ambition and aspiration to make the most of their abilities whilst coping with the influences of their peers and the media.
- Recognise and respect themselves and others, the views of others, backgrounds, cultures, values, and experiences.
- Develop skills for a healthier, safer lifestyle to allow them to respect and care for their bodies and be prepared for changes through puberty and adulthood.
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies, supporting students to keep themselves safe.
- Teach sex education as part of a wider social, personal, and moral education.
- Ensure all students understand reproduction and human sexuality.
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.

Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, Trustees, students, and parents/carers and has been approved by the Executive Education Team.

The policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if there is a need to respond to any amendments made to the DfE statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex, and Health Education.

Staff, Trustees, students, and parents/carers will be consulted every time the policy is reviewed and will be invited to share feedback by responding to a questionnaire circulated via MCaS. All feedback will be considered and will help to inform future revisions to the policy and curriculum.

Statutory Requirements

As a primary academy school, we must provide relationship education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#). and relationships and health education in line with the [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education DfE Statutory Guidance](#) (Updated September 2021). Please click on the link to access a copy of the statutory guidance. Sex education is not statutory in primary schools.

The guidance was updated in July 2025 and is available to view here: [Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education statutory guidance](#) (updated July 2025) We are required to implement the guidance in school from September 2026.

In teaching RSHE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in sections 403, 407, and 407 of the [Education Act 1996](#). We also have regard to legal duties set out in

- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.

Sex Education (non-statutory)

Currently, the National Curriculum states that the following statutory subject areas be taught through science and relationships/health education:

- The main external body parts (including external genitalia).

- The human body as it grows from birth to old age (including foetal development and puberty).
- Reproduction in some plants and animals.

Following consultation with staff, ACC members, parents/carers, and students, we have chosen to include the following non-statutory element of sex education within our curriculum.

Our sex education curriculum complements the statutory components of the Science Curriculum (reproduction in humans – to include learning about the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, sexual intercourse, fertilisation, gestation, and birth) and ensures students have the awareness and knowledge they need to keep themselves safe. A more detailed overview of the curriculum content for each year group can be found [here](#).

Parents/carers have a right to withdraw their children from sex education within the relationships, sex, and health education curriculum; for more information see the 'Right to Withdraw' section within this policy. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from the statutory elements of the science curriculum related to sex education or from health education which includes a focus on puberty.

Legislation and supporting guidance.

We used the following legislation and guidance to inform the development of this policy. Click on the hyperlink below to view the document.

- Education Act 1996
- [Learning and Skills Act \(2000\)](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [SEND Code of Practice 0 - 25 years \(statutory guidance\)](#)
- [Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools \(advice for Schools\)](#)
- [Preventing and Tackling Bullying \(advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying\)](#)
- [Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools](#)

Cross-reference can be made to other Anthem policies to avoid any unnecessary repetition.

These include but are not exclusive of:

- PSHE and Citizenship
- Safeguarding
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Anti-bullying
- Drug and Alcohol

Roles and Responsibilities

The Education Executive Team – will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

The Trustees – Ultimately have responsibility for the policy.

The Headteacher - is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from (non-statutory/non-science) components of RSHE (see right to withdraw).

The Curriculum Leader – is responsible for ensuring that taught content is age and developmental-stage appropriate and liaising with parents and carers about this content.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the curriculum
- Reporting progress to parents/carers
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSHE by notifying them when sex education is going to be taught and providing alternative lessons for the student where necessary.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher or PSHE lead.

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

Curriculum

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. RSHE is explicitly taught as a timetabled subject in our school. Key learning in RSHE is also addressed through cross-curricular links in other subjects e.g., I.T. literacy, P.E. and R.E. Teachers will deliver the RSHE curriculum in a way that allows students to explore varying viewpoints by ensuring that information is unbiased and impartial.

This will be reviewed every two years; amendments may be made following feedback from staff, ACC members, parents/carers, and students or due to changes in statutory guidance.

Our curriculum covers all objectives within the DfE statutory guidance for relationships and health education. The DfE statutory guidance document can be viewed here: [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education DfE Statutory Guidance](#) (Updated September 2021).

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

- Families and people who care for me.
- Caring friendships.
- Respectful relationships.
- Online relationships.
- Being safe.

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

We have carefully planned our curriculum to meet the needs of students in our school. We will regularly review and make adaptations to the curriculum to ensure we continue to meet the diverse and ever-changing needs of our students, or in response to local or global events. You will notice that our RSHE curriculum is a spiral curriculum (key concepts are revisited throughout the curriculum with deepening layers of complexity as students move through the school). We have purposefully designed our RSHE curriculum in this way so that our students can embed their learning of the most important aspects of the curriculum and have dedicated time to practice key skills linked to these very important key concepts. We involve students in their learning by using active learning methods and these include role play, scenarios, discussions, debates and problem-solving.

Inclusivity and Equality

All schools have a duty under the Equality Act (2010) to ensure that no child is disadvantaged because of their protected characteristic which includes: age, gender, race, disability, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage, and civil partnership.

The DfE guidance states that *“at the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson.”*

At Grampian, LGBT inclusivity is fully integrated into all aspects of the curriculum with the intention that students understand diversity in identity and sexuality within all aspects of daily life. By seeing positive representations of diversity, especially in children’s texts used across the curriculum, students learn that diversity is not difference. Every student can see themselves reflected in the curriculum content, the resources, and the school environment. We work hard to ensure that all families in our school community feel valued and diversity is celebrated.

The RSHE curriculum and resources may be adapted and differentiated to meet the specific needs of students with special educational needs (SEND) and learning may be scaffolded to ensure all lessons are inclusive. Teachers will seek specialist advice from the SENCO when required.

Creating a Safe Learning Environment

Teachers create a safe learning environment by:

- recognising that some content may feel uncomfortable, but referencing it’s vital importance within the curriculum.
- modelling curiosity, showing interest in the lives and interests of the students.
- welcoming questions that are age and developmental stage-appropriate.
- directing students with questions that do not align with the age-appropriate curriculum content to parents and carers.
- referring concerns that arise during RSHE lessons to the Safeguarding Team, using the usual channels of communication.

Teachers will use distancing techniques; these may include drama, roleplay, scenarios, and use of video clips. Distancing techniques put a space between a difficult subject and an individual student so that the question does not become, ‘what do you think?’ but ‘what might they think?’ instead. It enables tricky questions to be answered and supports students to debate and disagree without anyone feeling personally compromised.

All staff teaching RSHE know that they can access support from the RSHE Lead, SENCO, and Safeguarding Lead if they are faced with difficult questions from students, upcoming topics that may be triggering for some students, questions about how to ensure lessons are fully inclusive or following a safeguarding disclosure.

Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff are aware of the school safeguarding procedures; and this procedure will be followed in the case of a student making a disclosure or any member of staff/school visitor raising any concerns about student welfare.

Teachers delivering RSHE regularly check with the Safeguarding Lead whether there are any students in the class that are more vulnerable, or likely to be more affected by the lesson content. The Safeguarding Lead may give the teacher advice or provide additional support to the student as appropriate. This may include a student accessing the lesson content on a 1:1 rather than whole-class basis.

Any visitors delivering RSHE will be made aware of the safeguarding procedures and are expected to report any concerns to the appropriate member of staff.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSHE will be required to ensure that any speakers, tools, and resources used comply with this policy.

We will ensure that we only work with visitors/external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency/visitor, its approach and the resources used.

We will ensure:

- We are clear about what the visitors/agency are going to say.
- We are clear on their position on issues to be discussed.
- All resources to be used within the session have been checked and agreed by the RSHE Lead

We will:

- Ensure that a teacher always remains in the session with the visitor/agency.
- Remind teachers that it is their responsibility to stop a session if any element of the session does not meet with the school RSHE policy.

Parents and Carers

We recognise the importance of working in close partnership with parents/carers to deliver safe and effective relationships, sex and health education. Parents/carers were consulted during the development of this policy.

The policy is available via the school website and is available to parents on request.

- We will notify parents and carers when RSHE will be taught by communicating via letter (MCaS) and providing a link to the curriculum, content on the school website.
- On request, these documents will be translated into a parent/carer's preferred language to support their understanding.
- A member of the SLT will meet with parents/carers to discuss any concerns they wish to raise or questions they wish to ask.

Right to Withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships or health education (which includes a focus on puberty). There are elements of sex education included within the statutory Science Curriculum. Parents/Carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from the statutory elements of the science curriculum related to sex education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should in the first instance be directed to the Headteacher. An informal meeting will be set up to discuss parent/carer concerns. In the instance of a parent/carer deciding to withdraw their child from sex education, advice will be offered to support parents/carers to enable them to have positive conversations about sex education at home when they feel the time is right. An alternative plan for the student's time when the teacher is delivering sex education will also be agreed. This may include alternative work being given to a student to complete during this time or temporarily joining and taking part in learning within a different class group. Parents/carers will be asked to complete a *Request to Withdraw* form which will be held on the students' file to ensure all teachers know that the student does not take part in sex education lessons unless the form is removed at a later date with parent/carer permission.

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.
- Are aligned with our school ethos and values.
- 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.
- Reflect diversity to include the 9 protected characteristics.
- Are unbiased and balanced in their presentation.
- 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.
- Resources and lesson plans are adapted and differentiated for students with SEND.
- Resources are reviewed and updated regularly to ensure they are current.

Evaluation, Monitoring and Assessment for Learning

The delivery of RSHE in our school is monitored by class teachers, the PSHE Lead and Curriculum Lead as part of our internal monitoring systems through learning walks and pupil voice.

The effectiveness of the curriculum and whether planned outcomes have been achieved will be evaluated by scrutiny of student outcomes through learning walks, pupil voice and monitoring of work.

Assessment of student learning includes formative and summative assessment; this assessment will inform future curriculum planning and delivery.

Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning throughout each lesson and student voice will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities through subject leadership monitoring.

Review

This policy will be reviewed by the Trust every two years unless statutory changes, or feedback from consultation suggests otherwise. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Education Executive Team.

This policy will be reviewed in July 2026 and updated in line with the new requirements from the updated RSE and Health Education statutory guidance (July 2025).

- **Appendix 1 – Grampian curriculum overview**
- **Appendix 2 – Visitors’ policy**
- **Appendix 3 – Parent/carer form withdrawal from sex education**

Appendix 2: Jigsaw PSHE Progression Map

The Jigsaw PSHE Progression Map can be found on the school website at:

<https://www.grampian.anthemtrust.uk/the-wider-curriculum>

Appendix 2: External PSHE/RSHE visitor policy

Initial External Visitors Checklist	
<p>Whilst it is not always possible to plan for every eventuality, good visitor research and preparation can ensure pupils learn safely and effectively. That is why at Boston West Academy, teachers and external contributors use the checklist below, prior to, during and after a session.</p>	
Checklist	Y/N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you clear how the external contribution fits in with the aims and objectives of the curriculum for PSHE education? • Is the visit embedded in the school's PSHE education scheme of work? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the external contributor's knowledge and experience relevant and appropriate? • Are you aware of the external contributor's values, aims and objectives and their reasons for working with schools? • Has the external contributor been checked with the DBS? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you planned adequate time for discussing details of the visit, including any work for the pupils to plan or review? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the external contributor aware of the needs of the pupils, such as in relation to the class dynamic, ability, and age? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you discussed and informed the external contributor of relevant school policies, such as behaviour, sensitive and controversial issues and child protection and health and safety 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you discussed with the external contributor professional boundaries that the school retains responsibility for, such as class discipline? Are there any codes of conduct or professional boundaries that the external contributor needs to work within? • Has the school ensured that the teacher will be present throughout the activity to take responsibility for discipline and to ensure continuity of work and links to other areas of work? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has time been planned for the pupils to have time to reflect on what they learned from working with the external contributor? 	

Implications of practical considerations

When planning the session content, we will consider the following elements:

- Who will the visitor be working with? A large audience? A class? A year group? Consider how this will impact learning and how best to ensure the session remains interactive.

- Will the visitor be the sole contributor or will there be a carousel or panel format? Consider overlap, progression and how to round up the learning at the end of the session.
- Is the session planned in a way that will allow pupils to meet the learning outcomes? Is there interactivity in the session which supports young people to learn effectively?
- Might any young person be upset by this input? If so, are there ways to manage such eventualities to minimise the potential for harm?
- Have best practice principles on keeping learning safe in a PSHE education classroom been considered?

Evaluation Record of the external contribution

For completion by teaching staff after an activity or programme

Name of external contributor/organisation	
Date of Session	Year/Group
Brief aims/objectives	
<p>External contributor/teacher evaluation of the session</p> <p>What went well? What did you learn from this session?</p> <p>What went less well? How could the session be improved?</p> <p>To what extent were the aims met?</p> <p>Do you have any questions you would like answered as a result of this session?</p> <p>What further information/sessions would you like?</p> <p>Would we make any changes next time?</p>	

This form should be completed by a parent/carer if, following a discussion with the headteacher, they wish to withdraw their child from the non-statutory sex-education element of RSHE.

Appendix 3: Parent/carer form - withdrawal from sex education within RSHE

To be completed by parents/carers			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent/carer signature			

To be completed by the school	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	<p style="color: green; margin: 0;"><i>Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.</i></p> <p style="color: green; margin: 0;"><i>e.g. 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 5 classroom.</i></p>