Vita et Pax Preparatory School
Established 1936

RSE / PSHE Policy

Policy Originator	Head Teacher
Approved by	Governing Body
Date Approved	1 March 2026
Status	Statutory
Review Period	Annually (next: March 2027)
RSHE Lead	PSHE Co-ordinator

1. Introduction and Legal Framework

Vita et Pax Preparatory School provides a comprehensive programme of Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE). The programme is age-appropriate, inclusive and reflects the school's Catholic ethos while meeting all statutory requirements.

This policy is informed by:

• The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 (made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017).

• DfE statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (updated 2024).

• The Independent School Standards Regulations (ISSRs) 2014, Part 1.

• Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025.

• The Equality Act 2010.

• The Online Safety Act 2023.

• The Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) 2024.

• DfE guidance: Plan your relationships, sex and health curriculum (2024).

Relationships Education and Health Education are statutory for all primary-age pupils. Sex Education beyond what is covered in the national curriculum for science is not statutory in primary schools, but the school chooses to provide age-appropriate sex education in Years 5 and 6 to prepare pupils for the transition to secondary school.

2. Aims

- Build pupils' accurate knowledge of relationships, health and wellbeing.
- Develop the qualities and attributes pupils need to thrive as individuals, family members and members of society.
- Help pupils form and maintain respectful, healthy relationships.
- Teach pupils to recognise unsafe situations (including online) and know how to seek help.
- Support pupils' emotional wellbeing, resilience and mental health.
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes of puberty.
- Promote respect for diversity, equality and inclusion.
- Enable pupils to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.
- Embed safeguarding, including online safety, across the curriculum.

3. Relationships Education (Statutory)

By the end of primary school, pupils will have been taught about:

Families and people who care for me

- That families are important for children growing up and that families can look different (e.g., single parents, same-sex parents, grandparents, adoptive parents, foster carers).
- The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment, care, spending time together.
- That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, and that this should be respected.
- That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other, which is intended to be lifelong.
- How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice.

Caring friendships

- How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure.
- The characteristics of healthy friendships: mutual respect, trust, truthfulness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, sharing interests and experiences.
- That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others.
- How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, and how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable.
- That most friendships have ups and downs, and how to manage these.

Respectful relationships

- The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them or make different choices or have different preferences.
- What a stereotype is, and how they can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- The conventions of courtesy and manners.
- The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect, and that they should show due respect to others, including those in authority.

• The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships.

Online relationships

• That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.

• That the same principles apply to online relationships as face-to-face.

• The rules and principles for keeping safe online.

• How to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report concerns.

• How information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

• What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others.

• About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults.

• That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical and other contact.

• How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter who they do not know.

• How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult, and how to get help.

• Where to get advice, for example from family, school and other sources.

4. Health Education (Statutory)

By the end of primary school, pupils will have been taught about:

Mental wellbeing

• That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life.

• That there is a normal range of emotions and scale of emotions that all humans experience.

• How to recognise and talk about their emotions.

• How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate.

• Common types of mental ill-health (e.g., anxiety, depression).

• Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family, and the benefits of hobbies and interests.

• That bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and lasting impact on mental wellbeing.

• Where and how to seek support, including knowing that there is a trusted adult in school they can approach.

Internet safety and harms

• That for most people the internet is an integral part of life and has many benefits.

• About the benefits of rationing time spent online.

• The risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices.

• How to consider the effect of their online actions on others.

• How to recognise and display respectful behaviour online.

• How to report concerns about content or contact online.

Physical health and fitness

- The characteristics of a healthy lifestyle, including the importance of physical activity, diet, dental health and sleep.
- That a healthy diet includes a balance of food groups.
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle.
- How and when to seek support for physical health concerns.

Healthy eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet.
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals.
- The importance of water and hydration.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

- The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances, including tobacco, alcohol, nicotine (vaping) and drugs.
- The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- The risks and effects of drugs, alcohol and tobacco on the body.
- The support available for people affected by substance misuse.

Health and prevention

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness (e.g., weight loss, unexplained changes).
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun.
- About personal hygiene and germs, including bacteria, viruses and infection.
- The importance of sufficient good-quality sleep for good health.
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene.
- That vaccinations help protect against certain diseases.

Basic first aid

- Concepts of basic first aid: dealing with common injuries.
- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services.

Changing adolescent body (puberty)

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11.
- About menstrual wellbeing, including the key facts about the menstrual cycle.

5. Sex Education (Non-Statutory)

The school chooses to deliver age-appropriate sex education beyond the science curriculum, primarily in Years 5 and 6, to support the transition to secondary school. This includes:

- Understanding the physical and emotional changes during puberty (building on Health Education).
- The basics of human reproduction, taught in a factual and sensitive manner.
- Conception and pregnancy at a basic level.
- Answering children's questions honestly and sensitively, using correct terminology.

Sex education is delivered in a way that is consistent with the school's Catholic ethos, emphasising the importance of loving, committed relationships and the value of family life. Teaching is always age-appropriate and sensitive to the needs and maturity of individual pupils.

6. EYFS and Key Stage 1

In the EYFS and KS1, the foundations of RSHE are laid through:

- Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED) in the EYFS curriculum — self-regulation, managing feelings, building relationships, sharing and turn-taking.
- Circle time discussions about feelings, friendships and kindness.
- Stories and role-play exploring families, caring relationships and resolving conflicts.
- Simple rules about keeping safe, including 'my body belongs to me'.
- Introduction to healthy lifestyles — exercise, food, sleep, hygiene.
- Age-appropriate online safety messages.

7. Delivery and Teaching Methods

RSHE and PSHE are delivered through:

- Dedicated PSHE lessons timetabled for all year groups.
- Assemblies — whole-school and phase assemblies on PSHE themes.
- Circle time — especially in EYFS and KS1.
- Cross-curricular links — Science (human body, reproduction, health), RE (relationships, values, respect), PE (physical health, teamwork), Computing (online safety), English (discussion, empathy through literature).
- Themed events — Anti-Bullying Week, Safer Internet Day, Mental Health Awareness Week, World Mental Health Day.
- External visitors — health professionals, NSPCC, charities and community organisations (all vetted and supervised).

Teachers create a safe learning environment using ground rules such as: no personal questions, the right to pass, use of correct terminology, respect for different views, and confidentiality (within safeguarding limits). Distancing techniques (e.g., discussing scenarios rather than personal experiences) are used where appropriate.

8. Safeguarding and Online Safety

RSHE is closely linked to the school's safeguarding responsibilities:

- Teaching helps pupils recognise abuse, exploitation and unhealthy relationships, and gives them the language and confidence to report concerns.
- Online safety is embedded throughout, in line with KCSIE 2025 and the Online Safety Act 2023. Pupils learn about risks including cyberbullying, grooming, sharing of nudes/semi-nudes, and exposure to harmful content.
- If a disclosure is made during an RSHE lesson, the teacher follows the school's safeguarding procedures and reports to the DSL (Darren May).

· Staff are trained to handle sensitive questions and disclosures appropriately.

· The school's NeuralShield network filtering system provides an additional layer of online protection.

9. Inclusion, Equality and Sensitivity

The RSHE programme is inclusive and reflects the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010:

· Teaching is sensitive to the religious and cultural backgrounds of all families.

· Different family structures are acknowledged and respected.

· Content is accessible to pupils with SEND — differentiated and adapted as needed.

· The programme promotes respect for all protected characteristics.

· No pupil is singled out or made to feel uncomfortable because of their family circumstances, gender, religion or any other characteristic.

· The school's Catholic ethos is reflected in teaching about the value of family life, love and commitment, while being respectful and inclusive of all families.

10. Parental Engagement and Right of Withdrawal

Parents are informed about the RSHE curriculum through:

· Information on the school website.

· A parent information session or letter at the start of each academic year.

· Curriculum overviews shared with parents.

· Opportunities to view teaching resources on request.

Right of withdrawal: Parents have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education (the non-statutory elements delivered beyond the science curriculum). Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education, as these are statutory.

Withdrawal requests should be made in writing to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will discuss the request with the parent to understand their concerns, clarify the content being taught, and explore whether their concerns can be addressed. If withdrawal is confirmed, alternative arrangements are made for the pupil during those lessons. The right of withdrawal is reviewed if the child is within three terms of turning 16 (not applicable at primary level).

11. Assessment and Recording

RSHE and PSHE are assessed through observation, pupil discussion, self-assessment and teacher assessment. Assessment focuses on pupils' understanding, attitudes and ability to apply what they have learned, rather than on testing personal beliefs. Progress is reported to parents through the annual school report.

12. Staff Training

All staff delivering RSHE receive appropriate training, including on the statutory content, the school's approach, managing sensitive questions, and handling disclosures. The PSHE Co-ordinator leads training and provides resources and support to class teachers. External CPD opportunities are used where appropriate.

13. PSHE and British Values

PSHE lessons actively promote the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance. Topics include: rights and responsibilities, rules and laws, fairness, community, identity, diversity and belonging. PSHE contributes to pupils' SMSC development.

14. Monitoring and Review

This policy and the RSHE curriculum are reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and PSHE Co-ordinator, with input from staff, parents and pupils. The Governing Body approves the policy. Learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice are used to monitor the quality and impact of RSHE teaching.

15. Related Policies

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour & Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- British Values Statement
- SEND Policy
- Equality & Accessibility Plan

Approved by: Governing Body of Vita et Pax Preparatory School

Date: 1 March 2026