




RELATIONSHIPS, SEX & HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

RESPONSIBILITY:	LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE
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PROPOSED BY:	DEPUTY HEADTEACHER
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TYPE OF POLICY:	STATUTORY
ON WEBSITE:	YES

DATE AGREED BY LEARNING & ACHIEVEMENT COMMITTEE	29 SEPTEMBER 2025
FREQUENCY OF REVIEW:	ANNUALLY
NEXT REVIEW:	JULY 2026

APPROVED BY:	GOVERNING BOARD
DATE APPROVED AND ISSUED:	20 OCTOBER 2025
SIGNATURE:	 PIPPA BAZALGETTE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

In reviewing this policy, the Learning & Achievement Committee has taken into account the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

Rationale

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support. The aim of RSHE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

*Department of Education
February 2019/ September 2021*

Aims

At Vandyke Upper School, Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) will contribute to the requirement of the new Statutory guidance from the Department of Education (September 2021) and will be delivered as part of the Life Skills Curriculum. Life Skills encompasses Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education.

Awaiting updated guidance from the recent consultation

In our school we aim through implicit and explicit learning experiences to:

- foster self-esteem and respect for others as the cornerstone of effective RSHE education
- nurture a partnership between supportive adults – governors, teachers, parents/carers, and external agencies – to ensure sensitive support and guidance for young people as they grow and mature
- ensure young people understand their legal rights about marriage, consent, pornography and sexual identity
- encourage young people to enjoy relationships based upon mutual trust and respect, free from abuse and exploitation
- adopt a whole school approach to promoting the values of RSHE
- promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, physical and social development of students at the school and of society

Communication with parents/carers

The role of parents and carers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents/carers are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and to form healthy relationships.

(Department of Education, 2019)

The RSHE programme is designed to complement and support the parental role.

Parents/carers of both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 can access the overviews of RSHE on the school website. Parents/carers are also able to view the RSHE Policy on the website as well as letters informing parents of specific content covered in each year. Parents/carers also have the ability to contact the Life Skills lead and request access to RSHE resources.

Parents/carers will be informed of any collapsed mornings planned for the delivery of RSHE.

Parents'/carers' right to withdrawal

Parents/carers may withdraw their child from all or any part of the Sex Education programme which is not an element of the Science or Physical Education National Curriculum. It is good practice that parents/carers wishing to exercise their right to withdraw are asked to make an appointment to meet with the Headteacher to discuss any potential issues – although they are under no obligation to do so. Requests for withdrawal of a child must be made in writing to the Headteacher. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Teaching Content

Vandyke continues to develop knowledge on RSHE topics taught in Middle and Lower schools. Content is based on national and local needs of students and data provided from AYPH, Beds Police Report, Safeguarding Lead and observations from teaching staff/year teams.

These include but aren't limited to the following:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online, media and AI
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health,
- The Law
- Health education
- Human rights and activism

Please see school website to access curriculum maps for more detail.

Delivery

RSHE is delivered within the school's Life Skills programme. The programme will be delivered by a team of teachers working in Years 9-11. Other curriculum areas make an important contribution to the overall programme, especially Science, English, History and Geography. Young people also learn much from the overall ethos of the school which promotes a caring and respectful attitude for every individual, their feelings and their views.

In addition to Life Skills lessons, there are planned assemblies for all year groups that aim to support the content delivered within lessons.

There are also opportunities throughout the year to deliver collapsed RSHE mornings to year groups with the support from external agencies.

Groupings

Generally, students will be taught in mixed groups. However, wherever appropriate, single sex lessons will take place to allow for a more tailored learning experience. All students have an entitlement to RSHE, irrespective of sex or gender. For students where gender may present uncertainty in sex-based groups, students will be consulted prior to lessons as to which class they would feel more comfortable in. RSHE helps all students to understand their physical and emotional development and enables them to make positive decisions in their lives. It also ensures that students are clear about their legal rights when it comes to future relationships and their body.

Resources

The Life Skills Coordinator, with the support and guidance from The PSHE Association, Central Bedfordshire PSHE Network, as well as other charities and learning resource groups, plans all resources. Visitors and guest speakers are invited to take part in the programme where appropriate.

The lesson plan and selection of materials for each lesson remains the responsibility of each group's teacher to adapt to the needs of students in their class.

All lesson resources are available for inspection by parents and carers. The coordinator will be pleased to give information on an individual basis to parents/carers.

Staffing

RSHE in years 9-11 is delivered by Life Skills teachers. Staff are asked to deliver the programme within the guidance given in this policy. For every topic delivered, a selection of resources are available ensuring that staff can select materials with which they feel comfortable. Staff are supported by the coordinator through the delivery of the RSHE content. This support involves drop-in sessions about how to deliver RSHE and practical advice on answering queries from students as well as access to online CPD.

Time available

The Life Skills course is delivered through 2 x one-hour periods per fortnight in Year 9 and 10 and 1 x one hour in Year 11.

For presentations and guidance from external organisations and theatre groups, students may be withdrawn from lessons other than Life Skills.

Liaison with feeder schools

Liaison meetings with middle school's help ensure effective continuity and progression in sex & relationships education. These are conducted on a regular basis.

Answering difficult questions

Teachers are advised on how to answer students' questions. If an answer is not appropriate for the whole class, then a student will be encouraged to discuss the matter with his/her parents/carers, with a relevant health professional or via an appointment with a School Nurse or Counsellor. Throughout the year, students are given helpline contact numbers and websites through lessons, the pastoral team and notice boards.

Confidentiality

At the beginning of each unit, students will be reminded that certain information which is disclosed may not be kept confidential. In these cases, the school's Child Protection Officer will be informed. In cases of disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse, the school's Child Protection Policy will be adhered to.

Should the following arise, then the member of staff should follow the Child Protection Policy and report the issue to the Child Protection Officer so that a decision can be made as to any subsequent action:

- disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse of a student
- disclosure of pregnancy or sexual activity of a student
- a student seeks personal advice on contraception
- a member of staff feels that a student is at risk

Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about the RSHE curriculum should be made in writing to the Headteacher in the first instance.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Programme

The Life Skills Coordinator will discuss issues of concern with appropriate staff either during normal meeting time or on a one-to-one basis. Students have the opportunity to evaluate learning content in Student Voice and Council Opportunities. Students also partake in twice-yearly feedback tasks. Content is monitored to maintain relevance to current issues affecting students, which can change yearly.

Monitoring and Reviewing of the Policy

The policy, schemes of work, resources, use of guest speakers and trainers will be regularly updated and developed.

The policy will regularly reviewed by the Coordinator, the Child Protection Officer and other members of staff as appropriate.

The Policy will take into account the necessary links with other policies, multicultural and equal opportunities, child protection and anti-bullying.

This Policy has been written in line with the Department of Education Statutory Guidance (September 2021).