Inspire Partnership

Inspire Partnership Academy Trust

West Thornton
PRIMARY SCHOOL

West Thornton Primary School

Relationship and Health Education Policy

Incorporating; Relationships Education; Health Education and Relationships and Sex Education

Approval Date:	September 2026
Approved by:	Standards Committee
Policy Owner:	Trust Inclusion Lead
Review date:	July 2027

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	4
2. Definitions	4
3. Aims	4
4. Statutory Requirements	4
5. Policy Development	5
6. Curriculum	5
7. Delivery of RHE	6
8. Roles and responsibilities	7
9. Parents' Right to Withdraw	8
10. Training	8
11. Monitoring arrangements	8

1. Introduction

This policy covers the teaching of Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (referred to in this policy as RHE).

2. Definitions

Relationship Education

We define Relationships Education as teaching pupils about positive relationships, with a focus on friendships, family relationships, relationships with other children and with adults.

Sex Education

Sex Education teaches pupils basic scientific facts about how humans and other animals grow and reproduce. Sex Education teaches boys and girls about puberty, the changes that adolescence brings and conception. For further details on which year groups cover what please see 'Delivery of RHE'.

3. Aims

The aims of Relationships and Health Education (RHE) at our school is to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Teach pupils about the following protected characteristics and to understand their importance
    - age
    - disability
    - gender reassignment (In accordance with current DfE RSHE statutory guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, detailed teaching on gender reassignment is reserved for secondary education.)
    - marriage and civil partnership
    - pregnancy and maternity

- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

4. Statutory Requirements

As a primary academy from September 2020, we must provide Relationships and Health Education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

We also need to teach the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RHE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to statutory guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996, specifically incorporating the mandatory updates effective from 1 September 2026.

5. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – a working group has worked collaboratively on all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance, fully updating practices in line with new DfE mandates.
- Staff consultation – identified staff in each school were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy, emphasising transparency of curriculum resources.
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the CEO for ratification

6. Curriculum

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, staff will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

6.1 Non-compulsory elements

The non-compulsory elements of sex education for primary schools will be taught to pupils in Year 6 only. In line with DfE guidance, any non-compulsory sex education is strictly defined as:

- How a baby is conceived and born (where this goes beyond the biological facts taught in the statutory National Curriculum for Science).

6.2 Protected Characteristics

Within the curriculum, children will learn about the importance of equality, respect, and diversity. It is integral that all children gain an understanding of the world they are growing up in, and learn how to live alongside and show respect for a diverse range of people, families, and individuals.

At the Inspire Partnership, we take a well-considered, age-appropriate approach to teaching about differences, which includes actively teaching about healthy, loving relationships. When discussing families, we ensure our curriculum represents same-sex parents along with other diverse family arrangements to foster an environment where all structures are valued.

This approach ensures full compliance with our duties under the Equality Act 2010, allowing us to:

- Prevent and challenge all forms of bullying, prejudice and discrimination;
- Foster a culture of mutual respect, kindness and understanding among all pupils, ensuring every child sees their own background reflected positively;
- Promote equal worth and opportunity for every child, ensuring no family structure or individual is stigmatised or marginalised within our school community.

7. Delivery of RHE

RHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

The teaching of RHE will provide all children with the opportunities for deeper discussions during lessons including time for reflection and making connections with their own experiences.

RHE content will also be taught through assemblies and this will be followed up by discussions and further learning within classrooms.

The teaching of RHE must be adapted to meet the needs of all learners (e.g. SEND and pupils with social and emotional needs).

In Year 4 children will learn about the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty, children will recognise that these changes are normal and happen at different times for everyone. Within this, children will also learn about the menstrual cycle.

In Year 5 children will continue to learn the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty, including their impact on feelings, behaviour and relationships.

In Year 6, children will continue to understand puberty and will receive stand-alone sex education sessions about how babies are conceived and born which will be delivered by a familiar adult.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me

- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

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

Parents will be informed of which topics will be taught each term via the curriculum newsletter.

In addition to the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships, our RHE curriculum incorporates the latest statutory requirements for primary education, ensuring pupils are equipped to navigate modern challenges safely and confidently. This includes explicit, age-appropriate teaching on:

- Expanded Personal Safety: Practical understanding of environmental hazards, specifically focusing on fire, water, road, and railway safety.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing: Developing emotional literacy, which includes sensitive, supported discussions surrounding grief, loss, and bereavement.
- Online Harms: Early intervention regarding the risks of sharing personal information online. For older pupils (Upper Key Stage 2), this also includes flexible, context-specific education on the pressures and risks of sharing naked or inappropriate images, which will be delivered sensitively if it reflects the active safeguarding needs of the cohort.

8. Roles and responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

- The Trustee Standards Committee will approve the RHE policy and will hold Trust leaders accountable for the implementation.
- The Trustees will hold accountable Trust Education Leaders and Headteachers for ensuring that RHE is well led, effectively managed and well planned, as well as checking that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.

The Headteacher

- The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-science components of RHE (please see below).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RHE in a sensitive way

- Modelling positive attitudes to RHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-science components of RHE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

The RHE leader and the Senior Leadership Team are responsible for the monitoring and the delivery of RHE within the school.

Pupils

- Pupils are expected to engage fully in RHE and, when discussing issues related to RHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Before doing any activity with RHE outcomes, pupils and staff will set and agree ground rules. These ground rules should aim to ensure that the all the pupils are able to access their basic human rights

Our Ground Rules are:

- To be able to learn;
- To feel and be safe
- To feel and be respected.

9. Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships education as this is compulsory.

Parents/carers do have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within the curriculum which are taught in Year 6. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from the non-statutory components of sex education.

Parents/carers who have concerns around the sex education that is being delivered are invited to contact the Headteacher to discuss the matter. This will allow them to talk through their concerns and to ask any questions they may have. It will also allow the Headteacher to explain the curriculum and the benefits that their child will gain from taking part in the lessons.

Further information from the Department of Education can be found here:

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school to provide support and training to staff teaching RHE when necessary.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RHE is monitored by the RHE subject Lead through arrangements such as evaluating planning, learning walks and discussions with pupils.

Pupils' development in RHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by RHE leads annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trust Standards Committee.

VERSION CONTROL

Reference	Details
IPAT RHE June 2026	Adaptation of our statutory requirements as of September 2026
IPAT RHE June 2026	Change in wording of who is involved in policy development
IPAT RHE June 2026	Changes to what is non-compulsory in Year 6's sex education.
IPAT RHE June 2026	Updated bullet point for gender reassignment to align with updates in KCSiE 2026 and the removal of the gender questioning DfE proposed guidance.
IPAT RHE June 2026	Changes to how we teach protected characteristics as per new DFE guidance.
IPAT RHE June 2026	Changes to the curriculum, noting the biggest change of menstruation being taught in year 4 instead of year 5.
IPAT RHE June 2026	Updated paragraphs to reflect the changes in policy of what is included in the curriculum.