



Penryn College

Belong | Aspire | Succeed

Relationship and Sex Education Policy (RSE) including Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE)

Approved by	Curriculum and Standards Committee
Date approved	March 2026
Reviewed	December 2025
Responsible SLT member	Assistant Headteacher
To be reviewed	December 2026
Published	Website



Contents:

1. Statement of Intent
2. Statutory Requirements
3. Definitions
4. PSHE Content and Delivery
5. RSE Content and Delivery
6. Working with External Agencies
7. Roles and Responsibilities
8. Parents' Right to Withdraw
9. Training
10. Monitoring Arrangements

Statement of Intent

At Penryn College we understand the importance of educating pupils about relationships, sex and health so that they can make responsible and well-informed decisions in their lives. The teaching of RSHE can help to prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society.

We have an obligation to provide pupils with high-quality, well evidenced and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects. This policy outlines how the school's RSHE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

Penryn College Curriculum Intent: Our rich curriculum inspires students to succeed through a learning journey that provides knowledge, skills and opportunities for them to be responsible global citizens with positive life chances.

The aims of personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education in our school are to help pupils:

- Gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make safe and informed decisions
- Understand how to stay healthy and active
- Positively contribute to school life and life in the wider community
- Develop an understanding of democracy and how to voice their views

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at Penryn College are 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, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies



Statutory requirements

PSHE is a non-statutory subject. However, there are aspects of it that we are required to teach.

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, in line with the terms set out in statutory guidance

- We must teach health education under the same statutory guidance
- In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (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

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Behaviour Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equality, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policies
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Child-on-child abuse Policy
- Acceptable Use Policy and Agreement

At Penryn College we teach RSE and PSHE as set out in this policy.

As part of guidance policy forms part of annual consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers through Parents' Forum. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

- Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a Parents' Forum meeting to include this policy
- Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

Definition

For the purpose of this policy:

RSE is about the emotional, social, and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.



RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

RSHE is used to refer to the overall programme of relationships, sex and health education.

PSHE Content and Delivery

What we teach

Our PSHE and RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendices 1 and 2, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

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

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers on request.

The RSHE curriculum has been developed, and will be monitored and reviewed, in consultation with teachers, pupils and parents, and in accordance with DfE recommendations.

The majority of the RSHE curriculum is delivered through The Life skills curriculum, with statutory elements taught via the science curriculum. The RSHE subject leader will work closely with their colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the curriculum complements and does not duplicate the content covered in national curriculum subjects.

The school will ensure that the curriculum remains in line with the DfE's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' guidance at all times.

The school will consider the context and views of the wider local community when developing the curriculum to ensure it is reflective of circumstances in the local area. The religious background of all pupils will also be considered when planning teaching, to ensure all topics included are appropriately handled.

The RSHE curriculum will be informed by topical issues in the school and wider community, to ensure it is tailored to pupils' needs.

How we teach it

Through effective organisation and delivery of the RSHE, the school will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of a manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSHE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching.

The RSHE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

The curriculum will proactively address issues in a timely way in line with current evidence on pupils' physical, emotional and sexual development. RSHE will be delivered in a nonjudgmental, age-appropriate, factual and inclusive way that allows pupils to ask questions in a safe environment.



Teaching of the curriculum reflects requirements set out in law, particularly in the Equality Act 2010, so that pupils understand what the law does and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of the decisions they make.

The school will integrate LGBTQ+ content into the RSHE curriculum – this content will be taught as part of the overall curriculum, rather than a standalone topic or lesson. LGBTQ+ content will be approached in a sensitive, age-appropriate and factual way that allows pupils to explore gender identity, stereotypes, and the features of stable and healthy same-sex relationships. All pupils are expected to learn about LGBTQ+ content, and parents do not have a statutory right to withdraw their children from lessons that include LGBTQ+ content.

The curriculum will be designed to focus on pupils of all gender identities and expressions and activities will be planned to ensure all are actively involved.

The school will ensure it delivers teaching on sensitive topics, e.g. the body, in a way that is appropriate and sensitive to the various needs of the school community, e.g. cultural background. All teaching and resources will be assessed by the RSHE subject leader to ensure they are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are sensitive to their religious backgrounds and meet the needs of any pupils with SEND, if applicable.

Throughout every year group, appropriate diagrams, videos, books, games, discussion and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc., will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age and cultural background of pupils. Pupils will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the school's Online Safety Policy, and the Devices and Technology Acceptable Use Agreement for Pupils.

Teachers will establish what is appropriate for one-to-one and whole-class settings and alter their teaching of the programmes accordingly. Teachers will ensure that pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively and honestly.

Teachers will focus heavily on the importance of healthy relationships, including marriage, when teaching RSE, though sensitivity will always be given so as to not stigmatise pupils on the basis of their home circumstances. In teaching the curriculum, teachers will be aware that pupils may raise topics such as self-harm and suicide. When talking about these topics in lessons, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging these behaviours and will avoid any resources or material that appear as instructive rather than preventative.

Teachers will ensure lesson plans focus on challenging perceived views of pupils based on protected characteristics, through exploration of, and developing mutual respect for, those different to themselves.

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, parents will be consulted, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how will be planned in conjunction with parents.

The procedures for assessing pupil progress are outlined in the 'Assessment' section of this policy.

Curriculum organisation

The RSHE programme is delivered through a variety of opportunities including:

- Designated PSHE time as part of a spiral curriculum through Life Skills
- Use of external agencies and services
- School ethos
- Cross-curricular links, including Religious Education
- Assemblies

Terminology



Pupils will be taught the anatomically correct names for body parts; the school will dispel myths and will also understand other names of body parts that can sometimes be used to replace the correct terminology. Lessons around keeping safe and how certain parts of the body should be private must be addressed to ensure pupils are not left vulnerable.

Dealing with difficult questions

It is important that all school staff feel comfortable to take RSHE classes and answering questions from pupils. If the teacher does not feel confident leading discussions, then that is likely to be reflected by the pupils, and their learning will be compromised. The school provides regular professional development training in how to deliver sex education; this includes sessions on confidentiality, setting ground rules, handling controversial issues, responding to awkward questions and an introduction to the rationale of why teaching RSHE is so important. Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the RSHE subject leader.

Curriculum Links

The school will seek opportunities to draw links between RSHE and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning. RSHE will be linked to the following subjects:

- **Science** – pupils are taught about the main external parts of the body and changes to the human body as it grows, including puberty.
- **STEAM** – pupils are taught about how they can keep themselves safe online and the different risks that they may face online as they get older.
- **PE** – pupils can develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities, be physically active for sustained periods of time, engage in competitive sport and lead healthy, active lives.
- **Life Skills** – pupils learn about respect and difference, values, and characteristics of individuals.
- **Religious Education** – pupils learn about marriage, sexual relations and its risks, contraception and positive relationships.

RSE Content and Delivery (Relationships and sex education)

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

The school will make sure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way and within a planned scheme of work
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge, so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships



- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

RSE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching. The RSE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

Teachers will make sure that pupils understand the importance of equality and respect and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education. The curriculum is designed to focus on pupils of all gender identities and expressions, and activities will be planned to make sure all are actively involved.

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate material to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities.

Teachers will make sure that all pupils' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the pupils.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to make sure both are actively involved.

The school will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

- At all points of delivery of the curriculum, the school will consult parents and carers, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how will be planned in conjunction with parents and carers.
- The school will have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils work in RSHE as for other curriculum areas. Assessments used to identify where pupils need extra support or intervention. There are no formal examinations for RSHE; however, to assess pupil outcomes, the school will capture progress in the following ways;
 - Student voice
 - Written work
 - Self-evaluations
- It is important for secondary pupils to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils identify what is right and wrong and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:
 - Marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
 - Consent, including the age of consent
 - Domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty



- Sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion
- Pornography
- Abortion
- The protected characteristics
- The age of criminal responsibility.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance and share any relevant materials on request.

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 (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

Across our school, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - o Safe and supported
 - o Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

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

Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings



- Are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils
- 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 pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

We will make sure that when we consult parents/carers we provide examples of the resources that the school plans to use.

Use of external organisations and materials

Working with external agencies will be used to enhance the school's delivery of RSE and bring in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging pupils. External experts may be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the RSE curriculum but will be expected to complete with the provisions of this policy.

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

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 pupils' developmental stage

We will comply with:

- This policy
- The [Teachers' Standards](#)
- The [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- The [Education Act 1996](#)

We will also:

- 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
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers



- Share all external materials with parents and carers

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
- Work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

Roles and responsibilities

The governing board

The trustees will approve the RSE & PSHE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for making sure that PSHE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing all resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see Training section).

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE and PSHE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE and PSHE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE
- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Fiona Williams.
- 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 headteacher.

Pupils

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

Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of any withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action and provide the parents/carers with their decision in writing.



In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a pupil's specific vulnerability, the headteacher can refuse a request to withdraw the pupil from sex education.

Alternative schoolwork will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE 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, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE and PSHE is monitored by Head of LifeSkills through:

- Lesson observations
- Learning walks
- Whole-school monitoring

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

This policy will be reviewed by Head of Life Skills annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board as per PSE statutory guidance.