

Relationships, Health and Sex Education Policy (RHSE) Wookey Primary School



Updated and reviewed by Governors: July 2026

ADOPTED BY GOVERNORS: April 2023

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1. Intent & Ethos

At Wookey Primary School, we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities, and experiences of adult life. Our school is committed to a **relational approach to education**, prioritising student belonging, safety, and a whole-school culture of emotional wellbeing.

Relationships, Health, and Sex Education (RHSE) is delivered to every primary-aged pupil. It is designed to support children to grow into kind, caring adults who respect others and know how to keep themselves and others safe, both online and offline.

2. Definitions and Statutory Status

To ensure clarity for staff, governors, and parents, we distinguish between different areas of our curriculum. This framework establishes which elements are legally required and which elements carry a parental right of withdrawal:

- **Relationships Education (Statutory):** Focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, including family structures, caring friendships, respectful interactions, online relationships, and personal boundaries. **Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child.**
- **Health Education (Statutory):** Focuses on teaching physical health and mental wellbeing. This covers healthy lifestyle choices (diet, exercise, sleep), substance risks, emotional self-regulation, and managing change or loss. **Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child.**
- **Statutory Science Curriculum:** The National Curriculum for Science is a core legal requirement. It includes biological aspects of growth, the human life cycle, and human development (including puberty). **Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child.**
- **Sex Education (Non-Statutory):** Refers to content taught *beyond* the requirements of the primary science curriculum and relationships curriculum. At Wookey Primary School, this is strictly limited to a discrete, age-appropriate Year 6 lesson regarding human conception and reproduction ("How babies are made"). **Parents retain the legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from this specific content.**

3. Curriculum Structure & Content Delivery

All pupils must be taught the aspects of sex education outlined in the statutory primary science curriculum. This includes learning about the main external parts of the human body, how the body changes as it grows from birth to old age (including puberty), and the reproductive processes in some plants and animals.

At Wookey Primary School, we do not teach discrete sex education beyond these statutory requirements of the science curriculum. The school retains the autonomy to determine whether additional sex education is appropriate. Should specific needs

arise within our cohort or wider community, we will communicate and fully consult with parents and stakeholders before making any changes to our curriculum provision.

Inclusion and Diversity In line with the Equality Act 2010 and statutory RSHE guidance, our curriculum is fully inclusive and reflects the diverse world our pupils are growing up in. To ensure this content is age-appropriate and meaningful:

- **LGBTQ+ Inclusivity:** Rather than being delivered as a standalone unit or isolated lessons, LGBTQ+ content is fully embedded and integrated naturally across our relationships, health, and PSHE curriculum, primarily when exploring themes of family, respect, and care (e.g. ensuring same-sex parents are included when discussing family structures).
- **Context and Respect:** Teaching is adapted sensitively to respect the religious and cultural backgrounds of all pupils, fostering an environment where differences are understood and respected.

Curriculum Frameworks & Quality Assured Resources To maintain high-quality, structured delivery, we are members of the PSHE Association and utilise their quality-assured resources. We follow the 'Changing and Growing Up' Relationships Education plans (designed by Medway Council) and share these session overviews openly with parents. Where targeted teaching is required to safeguard and support our pupils, we supplement these with PSHE Association units on *Families* and *Consent* (focused on boundaries and personal autonomy).

4. New Core Content Requirements (September 2026 Update)

Our curriculum is dynamically mapped to integrate the modern issues and physical/digital risks that children face. The curriculum specifically incorporates:

- **Personal Safety:** A distinct statutory focus on real-world risk reduction, including age-appropriate lessons on road, rail, water, and fire safety, alongside safely navigating public spaces.
- **Online Financial Harms:** Critical digital literacy covering online scams, identity protection, fraud, and the hidden pressures/monetisation of video games (such as loot boxes and microtransactions).
- **Change, Loss, and Grief:** Grounded within general wellbeing, explicitly teaching about the emotional impact of bereavement and significant life shifts, recognising that everyone grieves differently.
- **Vaping & Nicotine Risks:** Factual public health information regarding the physical risks of vaping and nicotine pouches, embedded within wider drugs and alcohol units.
- **Relationship Skills & Boundaries:** Active, interactive practice focused on effective communication, building assertiveness, expressing clear personal needs, and strategies for managing difficult relationship feelings (such as loneliness or disappointment).

5. Professional Standards & Classroom Safety

Teachers are responsible for delivering a high-quality, age-appropriate relationships and health curriculum in line with statutory requirements. They model positive attitudes to relationships and health education, ensuring they create a safe, positive,

and participative learning environment.

To ensure effective and legally compliant delivery, staff adhere to the following benchmarks:

- **Strict Neutrality:** Lessons must remain objective, balanced, and focused on biological or legal facts. Teachers must ensure that they do not express personal, political, partisan, or religious views or beliefs when delivering the programme. Contested theories regarding "gender identity" must not be taught or presented as fact.
- **Anatomical Accuracy:** Staff must use, and teach pupils to use, the correct anatomical names for all body parts, including genitalia. This is an essential safeguarding tool, reducing stigma and ensuring children possess the precise language needed to identify and accurately report signs of abuse.
- **Safeguarding Integration:** Teachers are responsible for responding to any safeguarding concerns that arise during these lessons immediately, in strict accordance with the school's *Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy*.
- **Flexible Groupings:** Classes may be taught in gender-segregated groups, depending upon the nature of the topic being delivered at the time (such as specific elements of puberty) and/or the cultural background of pupils where it is deemed most appropriate to discuss the body in single-gender groups.
- **SEND Adjustments:** References to supporting pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) are integrated throughout our planning. Teachers make reasonable adjustments to sequence and differentiate delivery, ensuring the curriculum is accessible to all.

6. Parental Engagement & Transparency

We operate an open-door policy regarding our RHSE resources. Parents are their children's primary educators, and we seek to work collaboratively with our community:

- **Consultation:** The school proactively consults with parents, pupils, and staff regarding policy changes, schemes of work, and delivery methods.
- **Resource Access:** Parents have a legal right to inspect all curriculum materials and resources utilised in the delivery of RHSE. Wookey Primary School ensures that no contractual agreements with external providers restrict this transparency. Materials can be viewed on request via the school office or via Arbor.
- **Withdrawal Requests:** If a parent wishes to withdraw their child from the non-statutory Sex Education lesson in Year 6, a formal request must be made to the Headteacher. Alternative supervisory arrangements will be put in place for any child withdrawn during that discrete lesson.

7. Equality, Accessibility, and Inclusion

The school understands its responsibilities in relation to the Equality Act 2010, specifically that it must not unlawfully discriminate against any pupil because of their protected characteristics:

- Age, Sex, or Sexual Orientation
- Race, Religion, or Belief
- Disability

- Gender Reassignment
- Pregnancy or Maternity
- Marriage or Civil Partnership

The school is committed to making reasonable adjustments wherever possible to promote accessibility and inclusivity of the curriculum. The school understands that pupils with SEND or other needs are entitled to learn about relationships and health education, and the programme is designed to be highly inclusive of all pupils.

8. Staff Training & CPD

All staff members at the school undergo training to ensure they are up-to-date with the relationships and health education programme, safe delivery methods, and associated issues. Additional targeted training will be made available dynamically as updated guidance, new developments, or quality-assured resources are introduced.

9. Wider Curriculum Links

The requirements of the RHSE curriculum are delivered as part of our core commitment to our wider school values of respect, independence, engagement, and being active. We actively seek opportunities to draw links between relationships, sex, and health education and other curriculum subjects wherever possible to enhance pupils' learning and understanding. RHSE links in particular to:

- **Science:** Where pupils learn about the main external parts of the body and changes to the body as it grows from birth to old age, including puberty.
- **Computing:** Where pupils learn about e-safety, including how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully, and securely, how to keep personal information private, and how to manage digital settings.
- **Physical Education (PE):** Where pupils explore various physical activities, are physically active for sustained periods of time, and understand how exercise leads to healthier lifestyles.
- **PSHE:** Where pupils learn about respect and difference, emotional self-regulation, the characteristics of healthy relationships, the requirements of the law, and their responsibilities.

10. Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to:

- Section 80A of the Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- The Equality Act 2010
- DfE Statutory Guidance: 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (With mandatory implementation from September 1, 2026).
- DfE (2013) 'Science programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance.

11. Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team review this policy on an annual basis. The next scheduled review date for approval by the governing board is July 2026 to ensure full compliance ahead of the new academic year.

This policy remains a dynamic document and will also be reviewed in light of any

further changes to statutory guidance, feedback from parents, staff, or pupils, and specific safeguarding issues in the school or local area that may need addressing. Any changes made to this policy will be communicated clearly to all staff and parents.

Appendix 1: Relationships Education Curriculum Aims

In Key Stage 1 children will learn:

- **Families and people who care for me:** That families are important for them growing up because they can give love, security, and stability. The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, protection and care, the importance of spending time together, and understanding that families can look different but are all built on care.
- **Caring friendships:** How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure. The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, and support with difficulties.
- **Respectful relationships:** The importance of respecting others, even when they are different, make different choices, or have different beliefs. The conventions of courtesy and manners. Understanding different types of bullying (including cyberbullying) and how to report it to an adult.
- **Online relationships:** That people sometimes behave differently online (pretending to be someone else). Rules and principles for keeping safe online, recognising harmful content, and understanding that data can be shared online.
- **Being safe:** What boundaries are appropriate in friendships, both face-to-face and digitally. The concept of privacy and the implications of it. That it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. **[2026 Update]** Learning how to communicate needs effectively and develop early skills in being assertive and expressing clear personal boundaries.

In Lower Key Stage 2 (LKS2) children will learn:

- **Families and people who care for me:** That others' families sometimes look different from their own, but that they should respect those differences. That stable, caring relationships are at the heart of happy families.
- **Caring friendships:** That healthy friendships are welcoming and do not make others feel excluded. That friendships have ups and downs, but these can be worked through, and that resorting to violence is never right. **[2026 Update]** Developing practical skills for managing difficult feelings in friendships, such as frustration, disappointment, and loneliness.
- **Respectful relationships:** The importance of self-respect and how it links to happiness. That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, including those in authority. Recognising the impact of bullying and the responsibility of bystanders to report it.
- **Online relationships:** Critically considering online friendships and sources of information. Recognising harmful contact or content, understanding the risks of people they have never met, and how information/data is tracked online.
- **Being safe:** That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and unsafe physical contact. **[2026 Update]** Specific practical strategies on **Personal Safety**, including how to recognise, reduce, and avoid physical risks in

the context of **road, rail, water, and fire safety**, alongside staying safe in public spaces.

In Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2) children will learn:

- **Families and people who care for me:** That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people intended to be lifelong. How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help.
- **Caring friendships:** How to recognise who to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel uncomfortable, and how to manage conflict constructively.
- **Respectful relationships:** What a stereotype is, and how they can be unfair or negative. The critical importance of permission-seeking and permission-giving (consent) in relationships with friends, peers, and adults.
- **Online relationships: [2026 Update]** Critically engaging with digital content, understanding user rights regarding privacy and personal data, and the importance of active **location settings** for personal safety.
- **Being safe: [2026 Update]** Developing strategies for resisting peer pressure to share information or images online. Age-appropriate and respectful lessons regarding the risks of **image sharing** (e.g., using PSHE Association 'Pick your pics' frameworks), ensuring children have the vocabulary and confidence to report digital abuse instantly.

Appendix 2: Health Education Curriculum Aims

In Key Stage 1 children will learn:

- **General Wellbeing (Formerly Mental Wellbeing):** That mental and emotional wellbeing is a normal part of daily life. That there is a normal range of emotions (happiness, sadness, anger, fear) and having a varied vocabulary to talk about feelings. Simple self-care techniques like rest, hobbies, and family time.
- **Digital Wellbeing and Safety:** That the internet has benefits, but there are vital reasons for rationing time spent online. The risks of excessive screen time and how online content affects mood. Why social media and certain video games carry age restrictions.
- **Physical health, fitness, and eating:** The characteristics and benefits of an active lifestyle. What constitutes a healthy diet, the basics of nutritional content, and the risks associated with unhealthy eating.
- **Health, prevention, and first aid:** Safe and unsafe exposure to the sun. Dental health and oral hygiene. Personal hygiene and how germs spread. Knowing how to make a clear and efficient call to the emergency services.
- **Classroom Safeguarding Delivery: [2026 Update]** In line with our safeguarding benchmarks and the Medway framework, pupils from **Year 1 onwards are taught and encouraged to use the correct anatomical names for all body parts, including genitalia**, to build early safeguarding protection and eliminate social stigma, and ensure precise language when reporting concerns.

In Lower Key Stage 2 (LKS2) children will learn:

- **General Wellbeing:** Understanding how isolation and loneliness can affect children and the importance of seeking support early. Recognising that common emotional difficulties can be resolved with the right support.
- **Digital Wellbeing and Safety: [2026 Update]** Recognising **online financial harms**, including how to identify online scams and fraud, and understanding the targeted pressures/hidden costs of **video game monetisation** (such as microtransactions and loot boxes).
- **Physical health and prevention:** The physical risks associated with an inactive lifestyle. The critical importance of sufficient, good-quality sleep for weight, mood, and the ability to learn.
- **Classroom Safeguarding Delivery: [2026 Update]** Reinforcing and using the **correct anatomical names for all body parts, including genitalia**, to build baseline safeguarding protection, eliminate social stigma, and ensure precise language when reporting concerns.
- **Changing adolescent body (Year 4):** Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body are explicitly taught in Year 4 to ensure pupils are prepared for development before it occurs. In line with the Medway framework, this includes physical and emotional changes, menstrual wellbeing (the menstrual cycle), and nocturnal emissions (wet dreams), delivered equitably to ensure all pupils understand both male and female biological changes.

In Upper Key Stage 2 (UKS2) children will learn:

- **General Wellbeing:** Identifying personal triggers for seeking support, extending to exactly who in school to speak to if they are worried about their own or a friend's mental wellbeing.
- **Drugs, alcohol, and tobacco:** The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances. **[2026 Update]** Explicit, factual public health information regarding the distinct physical risks of **vaping, nicotine pouches, and the mechanics of nicotine addiction**.
- **Health, prevention, and first aid:** Recognising early signs of physical illness (such as unexplained changes to the body). The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination. Concepts of basic first-aid, including dealing with common head injuries.
- **Changing adolescent body:** Reinforced from year 4. Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, including physical and emotional changes. Key facts relating to the menstrual cycle and menstrual wellbeing.
- **Human Reproduction and Conception (Year 6):** Building on the statutory primary science curriculum, pupils in Year 6 explore the biological processes of human reproduction and conception (delivered via the discrete lesson titled "How babies are made"). This session addresses how a baby is conceived, human development in the womb, and birth. This content is delivered objectively and age-appropriately, emphasising stable relationships and care. As outlined in Section 2, this constitutes the non-statutory element of our curriculum, and parents retain the legal right to request withdrawal from this specific lesson.

Appendix 3: Curriculum Mapping (PSHE Association & Medway Council)

Statutory Content Area	Key Stage 1 (Y1 & Y2)	Lower Key Stage 2 (Y3 & Y4)	Upper Key Stage 2 (Y5 & Y6)
Families & People Who Care for Me	Autumn A: Roles/diversity of families; feeling cared for	Spring B: Family structures; care/protection/safety	Summer B: Marriage/civil partnerships; family commitments
Caring Friendships	Autumn A: Attributes of a good friend; conflict resolution	Autumn A: Qualities of positive friendships; resolving disputes	Summer B: Managing changing friendships and independence
Respectful Relationships	Spring A: Bullying vs. hurtful behaviour; inclusive communities	Autumn A: Conflict resolution; negotiating/reconciling differences	Summer B: Diverse relationship types; attraction/gender diversity
Online Relationships	Spring B: Safe internet use; privacy/pretending to be someone else	Spring A: Online safety out and about; reporting upsetting content	Autumn A: Digital communication; online consent/image rights
Being Safe	Spring A: Body autonomy/safe touch (Talk PANTS); consent in play	Spring B: Household hazards; personal boundaries/resisting pressure	Autumn A: Resisting grooming/pressure; digital safety reporting
General Wellbeing	Summer B: Recognising feelings/mood; grief/loss/bereavement	Autumn A: Managing loneliness; emotional intensity; coping strategies	Spring B: Mind-body equilibrium; sleep architecture; early intervention
Digital Wellbeing & Safety	Spring B: Identifying commercial/free-to-play mechanics	Spring A: Real-world impact of online actions; digital safety	Spring B: Algorithmic profiling; media manipulation; gambling risks
Physical Health & Fitness	Autumn B: Active lifestyle; rest/sleep balance	Spring B: Physical activity benefits; activity/rest routines	Spring B: Sleep hygiene architecture; healthy habit construction
Healthy Eating	Autumn B: Balanced nutrition; dental health/sugar impact	Spring A: Nutritional components; dental decay/acidic drinks	N/A (Focus moves to health-related habits/sleep)
Health & Prevention	Autumn B: Hygiene/germ transmission; vaccines/medicines	Spring A: Oral hygiene/independent care; household hazard management	Spring B: Mental ill-health early recognition; habit modification
Basic First Aid	N/A (Focus on safety rules)	Spring B: Reacting to accidents; treating minor injuries	Autumn B: First aid for burns/choking/asthma/spinal injury
Drugs, Alcohol & Tobacco	Autumn B: Medicines and vaccinations	N/A (Focus on healthy choices)	Spring A: Physiological effects (nicotine/alcohol/vapes); addiction

Changing Adolescent Body	Summer A/B: Human life cycle; external genitalia	Summer A/B: Puberty/menstruation/wet dreams; hygiene (Y4 only)	Summer A/B: Reproductive organs; conception; human life cycle (Y6 only)
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Appendix 4: Excerpts from Department for Education Statutory Guidance

National Curriculum in England: Science Programmes of Study (Key Stages 1 & 2)

Year 2: Animals, Including Humans

Pupils should be taught to:

- Notice that animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults.
- Find out about and describe the basic needs of animals, including humans, for survival (water, food, and air).
- Describe the importance for humans of exercise, eating the right amounts of different types of food, and hygiene.

Notes and Guidance (Non-Statutory):

Pupils should be introduced to the basic needs of animals for survival, as well as the importance of exercise and nutrition for humans. They should also be introduced to the processes of reproduction and growth in animals. The focus at this stage should be on questions that help pupils to recognise growth; they should not be expected to understand how reproduction occurs.

The following examples might be used: egg, chick, chicken; egg, caterpillar, pupa, butterfly; spawn, tadpole, frog; lamb, sheep. Growing into adults can include reference to baby, toddler, child, teenager, adult.

Pupils might work scientifically by: observing, through video or first-hand observation and measurement, how different animals, including humans, grow; asking questions about what things animals need for survival and what humans need to stay healthy; and suggesting ways to find answers to their questions.

Year 5: Living Things and Their Habitats

Pupils should be taught to:

- Describe the differences in the life cycles of a mammal, an amphibian, an insect, and a bird.
- Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals.

Notes and Guidance (Non-Statutory):

Pupils should study and raise questions about their local environment throughout the year. They should observe life cycle changes in a variety of living things, for example,

plants in the vegetable garden or flower border, and animals in the local environment. They should find out about the work of naturalists and animal behaviourists, for example, David Attenborough and Jane Goodall.

Pupils should find out about different types of reproduction, including sexual and asexual reproduction in plants, and sexual reproduction in animals.

Pupils might work scientifically by: observing and comparing the life cycles of plants and animals in their local environment with other plants and animals around the world (in the rainforest, in the oceans, in desert areas, and in prehistoric times), asking pertinent questions and suggesting reasons for similarities and differences. They might try to grow new plants from different parts of the parent plant, for example, seeds, stem and root cuttings, tubers, bulbs. They might observe changes in an animal over a period of time (for example, by hatching and rearing chicks), comparing how different animals reproduce and grow.

Year 5: Animals, Including Humans

Pupils should be taught to:

- Describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

Notes and Guidance (Non-Statutory):

Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.

Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.

Year 6: Animals, Including Humans

Pupils should be taught to:

- Identify and name the main parts of the human circulatory system, and describe the functions of the heart, blood vessels, and blood.
- Recognise the impact of diet, exercise, drugs, and lifestyle on the way their bodies function.
- Describe the ways in which nutrients and water are transported within animals, including humans.

Notes and Guidance (Non-Statutory):

Pupils should build on their learning from Years 3 and 4 about the main body parts and internal organs (skeletal, muscular, and digestive system) to explore and answer questions that help them to understand how the circulatory system enables the body to function.

Pupils should learn how to keep their bodies healthy and how their bodies might be damaged – including how some drugs and other substances can be harmful to the human body.

Pupils might work scientifically by: exploring the work of scientists and scientific research about the relationship between diet, exercise, drugs, lifestyle, and health.

Year 6: Evolution and Inheritance

Pupils should be taught to:

- Recognise that living things have changed over time and that fossils provide information about living things that inhabited the Earth millions of years ago.
- Recognise that living things produce offspring of the same kind, but normally offspring vary and are not identical to their parents.
- Identify how animals and plants are adapted to suit their environment in different ways and that adaptation may lead to evolution.

Notes and Guidance (Non-Statutory):

Building on what they learned about fossils in the topic on rocks in Year 3, pupils should find out more about how living things on Earth have changed over time. They should be introduced to the idea that characteristics are passed from parents to their offspring, for instance by considering different breeds of dogs, and what happens when, for example, labradors are crossed with poodles.

They should also appreciate that variation in offspring over time can make animals more or less able to survive in particular environments, for example, by exploring how giraffes' necks got longer, or the development of insulating fur on the arctic fox. Pupils might find out about the work of palaeontologists such as Mary Anning and about how Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace developed their ideas on evolution.

Note: At this stage, pupils are not expected to understand how genes and chromosomes work.