Ashdown
Primary School

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

Review Date: 16/04/2026

Next review date: Term 5 2028

Vision

Empower everyone to discover their potential, develop the skills to thrive with confidence and compassion, and make a positive difference in the world.

At the heart of our vision are our three key drivers:

People, Planet and Potential

People: we put people first. Kindness, inclusion, respect and support are the golden threads that run through our school day. Our school community is ambitious yet supportive; a place where everyone is valued and belongs.

Planet: We care deeply about our planet and our responsibility to protect it. We learn together how to make choices that are sustainable, kind, and thoughtful—helping children become global citizens who care about the world around them.

Potential: We believe every child and adult in our school community has unique potential, and it's our job to nurture it—whether that's academic, creative, social or emotional. We are an ambitious, supportive community where success is celebrated in all its forms.

Ethos Statement

We value everyone, nurture their strengths and enable them to flourish.

Values

Caring, Curious and Confident

Equal Opportunities

At Ashdown Primary School we believe that all children, regardless of first language, disability, race, gender, cultural or socio-economic background, should receive equal access to the full school curriculum.

Disability Statement

Ashdown Primary School is proud to be an inclusive school. We are able to offer access to the full curriculum for children who have a physical disability.

We have easy access into the main part of the building and have disabled toilet facilities within the school.

As with any additional needs the schools work closely with parents and appropriate outside agencies

Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) education policy including Relationships and Sex Education

Policy date and review

This policy was approved on 07/05/2026 and will be reviewed every 2 years or sooner if the PSHE curriculum is amended, for example in response to emerging themes, changing pupil needs or introduction of new legislation and guidance. The next review date of this policy is currently set for Term 5 2028.

The Governing Board monitors the impact of PSHE on an annual basis. The governors give serious consideration to any comments, consultation and evidence of impact.

Consultation with pupils will be conducted on a regular basis to support with reviewing the curriculum to ensure it remains responsive to emerging needs and the policy updated accordingly.

Policy context and rationale

This policy covers Ashdown Primary School's approach to teaching Personal, Social, Health & Economic (PSHE) education which includes relationships, sex and health education (RSE). This policy has been updated to reflect the new RSE Guidance released in July 2025 (for implementation by September 2026). This policy has been subject to thorough consultation with the whole-school community including pupils, families, staff, school governors and where relevant appropriate members of the wider community such as medical professionals and faith leaders. Pupil consultation has ensured that the needs of all pupils can be met through the delivery of an age and stage appropriate curriculum that addresses relevant issues, informed by analysis of public health data and pupil priorities.

Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through consultation events or by accessing a copy from the school website. Should a hard-copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting office@ashdown.e-sussex.sch.uk.

Policy values, aims and objectives

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Our school's overarching ethos is to 'Value everyone, nurture their strengths and enable them to flourish'. We do this through the development of our school values: Caring, Curious and Confident.

To achieve this vision, our governing board are committed to the following aims:

1. Children and adults experience a safe learning environment in which their safety, welfare and wellbeing is paramount.

2. Children, staff, parents and carers experience effective school management and use of financial resources.

3. Children are prepared for their future learning because of an effective and appropriate curriculum.

4. Children's progress and attainment (in terms of nationally measured knowledge and skills) is consistently above national year on year standards.

5. Children possess knowledge and awareness of the world they live in, together with the steps they can take to make a positive impact on it. Children experience Ashdown Primary School as an integral part of its local community. Children express informed attitudes and opinions on current global issues such as pollution, climate change, plastics use and health etc. and consider these in terms of their own actions and the impacts they have as global citizens.

6. Children demonstrate positive behaviours and attitudes to keeping themselves and others safe, because of both their taught curriculum and in school experiences designed to build personal resilience.

7. Children understand and express British values, attitudes, and behaviours towards fellow citizens, both within our local community and importantly, across the whole nation, recognising that our local community does not reflect the full ethnic and cultural diversity of the UK.

8. Children engage in a wide range of enrichment activities. These include the arts, music, sport, dance and other after school teams and clubs.

9. Because we have two sites' children experience a developmentally appropriate 'two stage culture', that first nurtures them at the beginning of their school lives and then prepares them for the next step into secondary education at the end of their time at Ashdown.

10. Children are taught by and interact with highly trained and well-motivated staff who benefit from high quality, relevant continuing professional development, aligning with the requirements of the curriculum, pupil progress, attainment, safeguarding, their professional performance and career pathways.

11. Children, their parents and carers enjoy the highest standards of information and communications from the school. This is further reinforced by the development of a strong brand image for the school, ensuring we remain the school of choice in Crowborough.

12. Children, parents and carers have total confidence in the school through the effective management of their concerns and complaints using robust processes and policies.

PSHE at our school is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of delivery.

RSE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health in an age and stage appropriate manner. RSE equips children and young people with accurate information, positive values and the skills to enjoy healthy, safe and positive relationships, to celebrate their sexuality and to take responsibility for their health and wellbeing both now and in the future. We recognise the importance of PSHE in preparing children and young people to live safe, fulfilled and healthy lives. The overarching objective of PSHE is to support children and young people through a journey of physical, emotional and moral development via the teaching of essential knowledge, skills and values within the framework of the law and relevant acts and guidance.

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of personal skills needed by pupils to establish and maintain relationships. RSE will ensure children and young people are encouraged to understand the importance of stable, loving relationships, respect, love, and care. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

PSHE will be approached through evidence-based, best practice principles to ensure the highest impact on improving pupil health, wellbeing, safeguarding and lifelong outcomes. The following principles are based on research evidence, supported by a wide range of leading organisations.

Principles of effective PSHE

Our PSHE programme:

- Is an identifiable part of our school curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all the Key Stages.
- Is taught by staff regularly trained in PSHE
- Uses carefully selected expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme, where appropriate.
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and how they can contribute at home.
- Delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Gives medically accurate information so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
- Gives pupils opportunities to reflect on their values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and nurture respect for different views.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from safe sources such as health and advice services including reliable information online.
- Fosters gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in everyday school life.
- Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences including those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Seeks pupils' views so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

Entitlement and equality of opportunity

Ashdown's curriculum and teaching is inclusive, and accessible to, all pupils, in line with our legal requirements outlined in the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

All children are entitled to access a broad and balanced curriculum delivered in an age and stage appropriate manner. Teachers will include a range of teaching styles and groupings to allow all children to make progress. Every child will be given opportunity to develop their skills independently and in groups, enhancing their own confidence and self–esteem.

We actively celebrate the diversity of our pupils, their families and the wider whole-school community. PSHE will always be taught in a non-judgemental, non-biased and fully inclusive manner through clear, impartial, scientific information as well as covering the law to ensure all pupils have equal access to the curriculum. We do not use RSE as a means of promoting any form of sexual orientation over another.

Thorough consultation, continual assessment and regular reviews of the curriculum we ensure that we continually recognise and respect pupils' different abilities, levels of maturity, personal circumstances (including faith or culture and that of their family, friends and the wider whole-school community) in accordance with the school's inclusion policy.

Learning and Teaching

The PSHE and RSE programme will be led by our school's PSHE coordinator. All staff involved in the delivery of the curriculum have received training to ensure that pupils receive clear and consistent approaches throughout their time at Ashdown Primary School. Whole staff and individual training needs will be identified through the school's self-evaluation process and staff appraisal.

On occasion external visitors, experts and agencies may be invited to contribute to the delivery of PSHE to enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children and young people. When this happens, our school will:

- Check the visitor or visiting organisation's credentials.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the visitor fits with our planned programme and our published policy.
- Discuss the detail of how the visitor will deliver their sessions and ensure that the content is age-appropriate and accessible for the pupils.
- Ask to see in advance the materials visitors will use as well as a lesson plan so that collectively we can ensure it meets the full range of pupils' needs (e.g. special educational needs) and make sure these are available for parents/carers to view.
- Agree how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with our school's policy.
- Monitor and evaluate the visitor input to inform future planning

PSHE will be taught through a range of teaching methodologies, including story-telling, drama, discussions, individual private reflection, quizzes and fact finding, value spectrums, debating, independent research and artistic presentations etc. This wide range of teaching strategies promotes engagement by all pupils, irrespective of preferred learning styles.

Curriculum

The majority of the curriculum is a statutory requirement to teach Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025), whilst ensuring schools fulfil their duties under the the Equality Act, 2010. PSHE also contributes towards the learner's citizenship education.

At Ashdown, our PSHE and RSE curriculum is underpinned by the PSHE Association's Programme of Study. This ensures that our provision is age-appropriate, evidence-informed and aligned with national guidance and statutory expectations. The PSHE Association framework supports a well-sequenced curriculum that develops pupils' knowledge, skills and attributes progressively across key stages, enabling them to make safe, informed and respectful choices in relation to health, relationships, wellbeing and life in modern Britain. Our curriculum reflects best practice in personal development, promotes inclusion and diversity, and is adapted thoughtfully to meet the needs of our pupils and community.

PSHE and RSE is taught through a 'spiral curriculum'. This approach means that pupils will gain knowledge, develop values and acquire skills gradually by re-visiting core themes to build on prior learning. PSHE will support the school's commitment to safeguard pupils through an age-appropriate curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world.

Our intended curriculum is detailed on our website www.ashdon.e-sussex.sch.uk but may vary in response to emerging issues and to reflect the rapidly changing world in which our pupils are living and learning. Where possible the curriculum will be complemented by themed assemblies, topic days and cross curricular links.

In July 2025 the Department for Education launched the new Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education for implementation by September 2026. Whilst much of the curriculum remains the same as the previous guidance, and was already covered within our existing curriculum, some elements have been given more focus or clarification to reflect the current world that we live in.

Primary	Secondary
Online safety	Incel and misogyny
Personal & travel safety	Violence against women & girls (VAWG)
Grief, loss and bereavement	Online safety
Vaping	Personal & travel safety
	Grief, loss and bereavement
	Vaping

Assessment

Pupils' learning will be assessed throughout providing pupils meaningful opportunities to demonstrate what they know, understand and can do, whilst helping to identifying their next steps in learning. This will ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress against their own starting points and to build on prior teaching and learning. It also enables us to check that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure and may include self-assessment tasks that will confirm pupils understanding of the topics. Information about these assessments and pupils progress will be shared with pupils and parents/carers as appropriate.

The quality of teaching and learning will be monitored through learning walks, book looks, planning and feedback review, developmental reviews, and informal drop-ins conducted by subject leads and/or members of the senior leadership team. The observations and findings of which will be used to identify and inform future staff training needs.

Responding to pupils' questions

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of PSHE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement. At the end of every lesson, pupils will be provided with an opportunity to ask questions in an open setting and will also be provided with an opportunity to raise questions through the use of an 'ask it tool'. Teachers will answer questions as fully as they feel age and stage appropriate based on the level of knowledge demonstrated by pupils during the lesson and as set in the statutory guidance. Teachers may delay answering a pupil's question if they need time to consult with a colleague or the school leadership team to construct an appropriate answer.

Teachers can refuse to answer a question that they feel is inappropriate and will never answer personal questions about their own body, personal circumstances or lifestyle choices. If a teacher does not answer a question, the pupil will have the reasons clearly explained and the teacher will work with the pupil to identify suitable sources of information where they can obtain an answer to their question. This may include encouraging the pupil to ask a parent/carer or trusted adult at home.

Confidentiality, signposting and handling disclosures

The school's responsibility to safeguard pupils through a curriculum that prepares them to live safely in the modern world will remain central to our curriculum content, teaching methodologies and supporting resources.

At the start of PSHE lessons, the class will take part in a group discussion to agree how they will listen to and respect one another so that everyone feels safe, valued and able to contribute. As part of this

conversation, pupils will be helped to understand confidentiality, including the clear limits of what a teacher can keep confidential should a safeguarding concern arise.

Distancing techniques such as the use of characters within PSHE avoids pupils feeling under pressure to participate or disclose information beyond that which is appropriate or feels comfortable. This strategy makes PSHE more accessible to all pupils including those who may have experienced unhealthy relationships and/or abuse.

Teachers will signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided. Teachers will also work closely with the school's pastoral system to advise on topic coverage so that the school can be responsive to pupil's pastoral needs and safeguarding arrangements can be actioned efficiently if required.

Teachers will conduct PSHE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. However, if a child makes a reference to being involved (or being likely to be involved) in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the reference seriously, and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. They will immediately inform the named person for child protection issues about their concerns. The designated safeguarding lead will then deal with the matter in line with our school's safeguarding policy.

Supporting vulnerable learners

We are aware that pupils with SEND, specific needs/experiences or those with additional support may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. RSE is particularly important for these pupils, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

The school will ensure that, in line with our Learning and Teaching principles, resources and teaching materials are appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils, are accessible for all pupils, including those with SEND and are sensitive to pupils' needs.

The PSHE coordinator will liaise with the safeguarding team prior to delivery of sensitive content to ensure that learners who may have negative experiences or trauma relating to the content are appropriately supported.

Involving parents and carers

We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children in PSHE and that learning is most effective when it is collaboration between school and home. We therefore wish to build a positive and supportive relationship with parents and carers of children and young people at our school through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation.

The PSHE and RSE curriculum overview is available to families on the school website and curriculum plans can be made available to families on request.

In the term before RSE is taught, a letter will be sent home outlining the programme of study so that families are aware of the content that will be covered and can ask any questions in advance (Appendix 1). We also operate an open-door policy enabling parents to discuss PSHE at any time throughout the school year.

The vast majority of PSHE is compulsory. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents and carers are only able to request that their child is excused from Sex Education, taught outside of the national curriculum for science. If a parent wishes their child to be excused, they should contact the Head of School, making clear which aspects of the programme they do not wish their child to participate in. The Head of School will outline to parents/carers the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes rather than what was directly said

through delivery of quality assured resources. If the withdrawal process is continued the parent/carer must outline this in writing and the school will record its actions and hold a copy of the letter on file.

This process is the same for pupils with SEND. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Head of School may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Links to other school policies and curriculum

This policy complements the following policies:

- Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Equalities Policy
- SEND Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Learning and Teaching Policy

Appendix 1:

Model Letter to Parents

As part of the PSHE (personal, social, health and economic education) curriculum this term, your child will be receiving relationships and sex education (RSE). Understandably, this is a sensitive area and we need to ensure that students and parents/carers are aware of the content of this unit. Equally, it is important that we are made aware of any issues or concerns that you or the children may have prior to the start of this topic.

Your child will mostly receive their RSE lessons in their usual class groupings appropriate to their age. Formal and appropriate terminology will be used throughout the sessions.

The resources and programme of study will be available to view upon request. Please do not hesitate to come and discuss any questions or issues that you may have regarding this topic or any concerns that may affect your child directly relating to this scheme of work.