



BENSHAM MANOR School

BENSHAM MANOR SCHOOL RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

Date reviewed: **July 2026**

Next review: **July 2027**

Policy Lead: **Aisha Khan – Head of Humanities and PSHCE**

Approved by: **Fiona Robinson**

Date approved: **15.07.2026**

This policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier where there are significant changes to statutory guidance or legislation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Bensham Manor School is committed to providing high-quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) that equips pupils with the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

This policy reflects the statutory requirements for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education and has been reviewed in preparation for the revised statutory guidance applicable from September 2026.

As a specialist secondary school for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Bensham Manor School recognises the particular importance of effective RSHE. Some pupils with SEND may experience increased vulnerability to abuse, exploitation, coercion, inappropriate relationships and online harms. They may also require concepts relating to relationships, consent, personal boundaries and safety to be explicitly taught, regularly revisited and presented in accessible ways.

Our RSHE curriculum therefore aims to provide pupils with meaningful, practical and relevant learning that supports them both now and in preparation for adulthood.

RSHE at Bensham Manor School encompasses:

- relationships and friendships;
- families and committed relationships;
- respect, equality and diversity;
- personal boundaries and consent;
- recognising healthy and unhealthy relationships;
- safeguarding and protection from abuse and exploitation;
- online relationships, social media and digital safety;
- intimate and sexual relationships;
- sexual and reproductive health;
- physical health and wellbeing;
- mental and emotional wellbeing;
- puberty and the changing body;
- drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping;
- personal safety and first aid; and
- accessing appropriate help and support.

RSHE is not taught in isolation. Relevant knowledge and skills are reinforced through PSHCE, Science, CDM, Childcare Humanities, tutor time, safeguarding education, careers and preparation for adulthood - lifeskills, as appropriate.

2. AIMS

The aims of RSHE at Bensham Manor School are to:

1. Provide a safe, supportive and inclusive environment in which pupils can learn about relationships, health and wellbeing.
 2. Equip pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to recognise healthy, respectful and appropriate relationships.
 3. Help pupils recognise unsafe, abusive, exploitative, coercive or harmful behaviour and understand how and where to seek help.
 4. Develop pupils' understanding of personal boundaries, privacy and consent.
 5. Provide accurate, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate information about puberty, relationships, sexual health and the human body.
 6. Address misconceptions that pupils may encounter through peers, social media, pornography, online content or other sources.
 7. Develop pupils' confidence, communication, decision-making and assertiveness skills.
 8. Help pupils understand the importance of respect for themselves and others.
 9. Support pupils to develop positive physical, mental and emotional wellbeing.
 10. Prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
 11. Ensure that pupils understand relevant aspects of the law in an accessible and meaningful way.
 12. Promote respect for different people, families, cultures, beliefs and backgrounds while ensuring that teaching remains factual, balanced and consistent with the school's statutory duties.
 13. Provide pupils with the knowledge and confidence to access trusted sources of help and support.
 14. Ensure that RSHE is accessible and appropriately differentiated for every pupil.
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3. OUR APPROACH TO RSHE

At Bensham Manor School, RSHE is centred on the individual needs of our pupils.

Teaching will take account of:

- chronological age;
- developmental stage;
- cognitive ability;
- communication needs;
- prior knowledge and understanding;
- emotional maturity;
- individual vulnerabilities;
- physical development;
- safeguarding needs; and
- preparation for adulthood.

Pupils within the same chronological age group may have significantly different levels of understanding. Teaching will therefore be carefully differentiated while ensuring that pupils are not unnecessarily denied access to important safeguarding information.

Pupils will be supported to understand concepts through methods appropriate to their needs. These may include:

- visual resources;
- symbols and accessible language;
- social stories;
- scenarios and case studies;
- role play;
- repetition and retrieval;
- videos and appropriate digital resources;
- discussion;
- storyboarding;
- practical activities; and
- individual or small-group interventions.

Important safeguarding concepts may be revisited regularly because some pupils require repeated teaching before they can understand, retain and apply learning in different contexts.

4. CURRICULUM CONTENT

The RSHE curriculum follows statutory requirements and is informed by the needs of pupils at Bensham Manor School.

The curriculum is sequenced so that pupils can build their knowledge and understanding over time. Topics may be revisited at increasing levels of complexity according to pupils' needs and development.

The curriculum includes learning relating to:

Relationships and families

Pupils will learn about friendships, families, caring relationships, committed relationships and the characteristics of healthy relationships.

They will be supported to understand concepts including trust, honesty, kindness, respect, loyalty, communication, privacy and boundaries.

Respectful relationships

Pupils will learn how people should treat one another and how to recognise respectful and disrespectful behaviour.

Teaching will address bullying, discrimination, prejudice, harmful stereotypes, sexual harassment, misogyny and other harmful behaviours in an age-appropriate and accessible manner.

Consent and personal boundaries

Consent and personal boundaries will be taught progressively and repeatedly.

Pupils will learn that they have rights in relation to their own bodies and personal space and that other people also have boundaries that must be respected.

Teaching will help pupils understand that consent must be freely given, can be withdrawn and should never be assumed.

Being safe

Pupils will learn how to recognise situations that may be unsafe and how to seek help.

Teaching may include, where appropriate, grooming, exploitation, coercion, abuse, domestic abuse, sexual violence, sexual harassment, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and other forms of harm.

Content will be adapted carefully so that pupils receive important safeguarding knowledge without unnecessary or inappropriate detail.

Online safety and relationships

Pupils will be taught that the same expectations regarding safety, respect and consent apply online as offline.

Teaching will address relevant risks including:

- cyberbullying;
- grooming;
- online exploitation;
- scams and manipulation;
- sharing personal information;
- image sharing;
- harmful and inappropriate content;
- pornography;
- social media;

- online relationships;
- misinformation and disinformation;
- unrealistic online content;
- online misogyny and harmful attitudes;
- excessive or unhealthy technology use; and
- where and how to report concerns.

Intimate and sexual relationships

At an appropriate stage, pupils will receive factual and accessible teaching about intimate relationships, sexual health, contraception, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and accessing support.

Teaching will emphasise respect, consent, safety and the right not to be pressured into sexual activity.

Physical and mental health

Health Education will support pupils to understand their physical and emotional wellbeing and recognise when they may need support.

Teaching may include:

- emotional literacy;
- mental wellbeing;
- managing difficult feelings;
- resilience and coping strategies;
- loneliness and isolation;
- seeking help;
- physical activity;
- healthy eating;
- sleep;
- personal hygiene;
- dental health;
- puberty;
- menstrual wellbeing;
- health prevention;
- drugs and alcohol;
- smoking and vaping; and
- basic first aid.

Sensitive topics relating to serious mental health concerns will be taught carefully, safely and in accordance with current safeguarding guidance.

5. AGE AND DEVELOPMENTAL APPROPRIATENESS

Bensham Manor School recognises that chronological age and developmental understanding do not always correspond.

Decisions about when and how content is taught will consider:

- statutory curriculum requirements;
- the pupil's chronological age;
- developmental and cognitive understanding;
- communication needs;
- physical development;
- safeguarding needs;
- known vulnerabilities;
- prior learning; and
- the professional judgement of appropriately trained staff.

There may be circumstances where a topic needs to be introduced earlier than originally planned because of a safeguarding concern, emerging pupil need or relevant local or national issue.

Similarly, pupils may need content to be repeated or revisited beyond the age at which it would ordinarily be introduced.

Where significant adaptations to planned RSHE provision are being considered, the RSHE Subject Lead and, where appropriate, members of the Senior Leadership Team and safeguarding team will be consulted.

6. SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE LEARNING

RSHE will be delivered within a safe and supportive learning environment.

Staff will establish appropriate ground rules and use professional judgement when responding to questions.

Where appropriate, distancing techniques will be used so that pupils can discuss sensitive issues without being required to disclose personal experiences. These may include fictional characters, scenarios, case studies and storyboards.

Pupils will not be encouraged to share private or personal information publicly within lessons.

Staff will ensure that discussions remain respectful and appropriate.

Where a pupil asks a question that is not appropriate to answer within the lesson or group setting, staff may respond individually, seek advice from the RSHE Subject Lead or safeguarding team, or signpost the pupil to an appropriate source of support.

7. SAFEGUARDING AND CONFIDENTIALITY

RSHE is an important part of the school's safeguarding provision.

Effective RSHE can help pupils recognise abuse, exploitation, coercion and unsafe situations and develop the vocabulary and confidence needed to seek help.

Staff cannot promise confidentiality to pupils.

If a pupil discloses information that raises a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Pupils will be informed, in an appropriate way, that information may need to be shared with another trusted adult where there are concerns about their safety or the safety of another person.

All safeguarding concerns arising during RSHE will be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead in accordance with school procedures.

RSHE teaching will always operate alongside, and never replace, the school's safeguarding procedures.

8. WORKING WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

Bensham Manor School recognises that parents and carers are their children's first and most important educators.

The school is committed to working openly and collaboratively with parents and carers in relation to RSHE.

Parents and carers will be provided with clear information about the school's RSHE curriculum. The school's curriculum map will be available through the school website and additional information about curriculum content will be provided on request.

The school recognises that families may hold a range of religious, cultural and personal beliefs. Parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school where they have questions or concerns about RSHE teaching.

The school will:

1. Provide clear information about what is taught through RSHE.
2. Explain how the curriculum is sequenced and adapted for pupils with SEND.
3. Consult parents and carers as part of the development and review of the RSHE policy.
4. Provide opportunities for parents and carers to raise questions or concerns.
5. Communicate sensitively about particularly significant or sensitive areas of the curriculum where appropriate.
6. Explain clearly the parental rights relating to withdrawal from sex education.
7. Work collaboratively with families where individual pupils require particular adaptations or support.

9. PARENTAL ACCESS TO RSHE RESOURCES

Bensham Manor School is committed to openness and transparency regarding RSHE teaching.

All RSHE curriculum materials and resources used by the school will be available for parents and carers to view on request.

This includes materials:

- created by school staff;
- obtained from educational organisations;
- provided by external agencies;
- delivered by visiting speakers or professionals; and
- supplied by commercial or third-party providers.

The school will not enter into arrangements that prevent parents and carers from viewing the materials used to teach their children.

Where resources are protected by copyright or licensing restrictions and cannot legally be copied or distributed, parents and carers will be provided with an appropriate opportunity to view the resources.

Requests to view resources should be made to the PSHCE/RSHE Subject Lead or an appropriate member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The school will respond to requests within a reasonable timeframe.

Where a parent or carer has concerns about a particular resource, the school will listen to and consider these concerns. However, decisions about curriculum content and resources will ultimately remain the responsibility of the school, taking account of statutory requirements, safeguarding responsibilities and the needs of pupils.

10. THE RIGHT TO WITHDRAW FROM SEX EDUCATION

There is no right to withdraw pupils from Relationships Education or Health Education.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, other than content taught as part of the statutory Science curriculum.

Parents and carers who are considering withdrawal are encouraged to contact the school so that the content, purpose and approach to the relevant teaching can be discussed.

Requests for withdrawal should be made to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will discuss the request with the parent or carer and, except in exceptional circumstances, will respect the parent's or carer's request.

Appropriate alternative education will be provided during any period of withdrawal.

In accordance with statutory requirements, a pupil may choose to receive sex education from three school terms before their 16th birthday. Where a pupil makes such a request, the school will make arrangements for them to receive the relevant teaching during one of those three terms.

11. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

Bensham Manor School is committed to ensuring that RSHE is accessible and inclusive.

Teaching will comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the school's wider equality duties.

The school recognises and respects the diversity of its pupils and families, including differences relating to:

- disability;
- sex;
- race and ethnicity;
- religion and belief;
- sexual orientation;
- family circumstances;
- culture; and
- other protected characteristics.

RSHE will be taught factually, sensitively and respectfully.

Pupils will learn that discrimination, bullying, harassment and abuse are unacceptable.

Teaching about different families, relationships and protected characteristics will be appropriate to pupils' age and understanding and will not seek to promote any particular lifestyle, sexual orientation or belief.

The school will also respect the importance of religion and belief within the lives of many pupils and families. Pupils will be supported to understand that people may hold different beliefs and values while everyone is entitled to safety, dignity and respect.

Where appropriate, consideration may be given to groupings and teaching arrangements to support pupils' learning, dignity, communication and individual needs. Such decisions will not prevent pupils from receiving their statutory entitlement.

12. SEND AND ACCESSIBILITY

The school recognises that pupils with SEND have varied needs and thus does not apply a one size fits all rule. We understand some pupils may require even further additional support to access and understand RSHE.

Teaching may therefore be:

- differentiated;
- simplified;
- broken into smaller steps;
- repeated;
- revisited;
- supported through visual communication;

- taught through concrete examples;
- delivered in smaller groups; or
- provided through individual intervention where necessary.

Adaptation will not mean that pupils are unnecessarily excluded from essential safeguarding knowledge. Teaching will always be age and need appropriate.

Staff will maintain high expectations while recognising that individual pupils may demonstrate understanding in different ways.

The school will consider individual communication systems and support pupils to develop appropriate vocabulary to describe their bodies, feelings, relationships and concerns.

13. TEACHING RESOURCES

All resources used for RSHE will be selected carefully.

Before use, staff will consider whether resources are:

- factually accurate;
- suitable for the intended pupils;
- accessible;
- appropriate to the learning objective;
- sensitive to pupils' needs and experiences;
- consistent with safeguarding expectations;
- free from unnecessary stereotyping or stigma; and
- appropriate for the school's SEND context.

Materials containing sensitive or potentially distressing content will be used only where there is a clear educational purpose and where the content is appropriate for the pupils receiving it.

Resources will not be used simply because they are included within a published scheme or recommended by an external provider. The school retains responsibility for reviewing the suitability of all materials.

14. EXTERNAL AGENCIES AND VISITORS

Bensham Manor School may work with appropriately qualified external organisations and professionals where their expertise enhances the RSHE curriculum.

The school will remain responsible for the content delivered.

Before any external session takes place, the school will consider:

- the purpose of the session;
- the suitability and experience of the provider;
- the content and resources to be used;
- safeguarding arrangements;
- accessibility for pupils with SEND; and
- how the session fits within the planned curriculum.

External providers must comply with relevant school policies and safeguarding expectations.

A member of school staff will normally remain present during sessions delivered by external visitors.

Any resources used by an external provider will be available for parents and carers to view on request.

15. TEACHING AND DELIVERY

RSHE may be delivered through:

1. Specialist PSHCE teaching.
2. Tutor time.
3. Drop-down or collapsed timetable days.
4. Cross-curricular teaching where appropriate.
5. Small-group teaching.
6. Individual interventions.
7. The Wellbeing Team.
8. External professionals and specialist organisations where appropriate.

A range of teaching approaches may be used, including discussion, quizzes, scenarios, case studies, stories, role play, video resources, visual materials, practical activities and structured research.

Teaching will be adapted according to pupils' individual needs.

16. RESPONDING TO PUPIL QUESTIONS

Pupils will be encouraged to ask appropriate questions within a safe learning environment.

Staff will answer questions factually and sensitively, taking account of:

- the pupil's age and understanding;
- the learning objective;
- the appropriateness of answering within a group setting;
- safeguarding considerations; and
- the needs of other pupils.

Staff are not required to answer questions that are inappropriate for the setting or beyond the intended curriculum content.

Where a question raises a safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures will be followed.

17. ASSESSMENT

Assessment within RSHE is used to identify what pupils know, understand and can apply.

Assessment may include:

- questioning;
- discussion;
- observation;
- pupil self-assessment;
- practical activities;
- quizzes;
- written or visual work;
- scenario-based assessment;
- teacher assessment; and
- pupil feedback.

Assessment will take account of pupils' communication and learning needs.

The aim is not simply to assess whether pupils can recall information, but whether they can use their learning to make safer and healthier choices.

18. MONITORING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

The quality and effectiveness of RSHE will be monitored through appropriate quality assurance processes, which may include:

- curriculum reviews;
- lesson observations and learning walks;
- review of planning and resources;
- pupil work;
- pupil voice;
- staff feedback;
- parent and carer feedback;
- informal formative assessment information;
- safeguarding information and emerging needs; and
- discussion with relevant professionals.

The RSHE/PSHCE Subject Lead, Aisha Khan will use this information to identify strengths, areas for development and staff training needs.

19. PUPIL VOICE

Pupil voice is an important part of evaluating RSHE.

Pupils may contribute their views through:

- class discussions;
- questionnaires;
- School Council;
- pupil focus groups;
- curriculum evaluations; and
- individual feedback.

Pupil feedback will help the school understand whether pupils feel that the curriculum is accessible, relevant and helpful.

Pupil voice will be considered alongside statutory curriculum requirements, safeguarding responsibilities, professional judgement and parental consultation.

20. STAFF TRAINING

Bensham Manor School recognises that staff delivering RSHE require appropriate knowledge, confidence and support.

The school will provide opportunities for relevant staff to access professional development.

This may include:

- subject-specific RSHE training;
- safeguarding training;
- SEND-specific approaches to RSHE;
- training relating to online harms;
- training relating to emerging issues affecting children and young people;
- opportunities to review resources and curriculum content; and
- support from relevant professionals and external agencies.

Staff will be encouraged to seek advice where they are uncertain about how to approach a sensitive topic or respond to a pupil question.

21. POLICY CONSULTATION

The school will consult appropriately when reviewing its RSHE policy and curriculum.

Consultation may include:

- parents and carers;
- pupils;
- teaching and support staff;
- the Senior Leadership Team;
- governors;
- the School Council;
- relevant health and safeguarding professionals; and
- local authority advisers.

The school will consider feedback while retaining responsibility for ensuring that the curriculum meets statutory requirements and the needs of its pupils.

22. RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Body

The Governing Body will ensure that the school fulfils its statutory responsibilities in relation to RSHE.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for ensuring that RSHE is delivered appropriately and in accordance with statutory requirements.

The PSHCE/RSHE Subject Lead

The Subject Lead is responsible for:

- curriculum planning and development;
- ensuring appropriate progression;
- supporting staff;
- reviewing teaching resources;
- monitoring provision;
- supporting parental engagement;
- responding to requests to view resources;
- identifying training needs; and
- keeping the curriculum under review.

Teaching staff

Staff delivering RSHE are responsible for:

- delivering agreed curriculum content;
 - adapting teaching appropriately;
 - creating a safe learning environment;
 - using approved and appropriate resources;
 - responding professionally to pupil questions; and
 - following safeguarding procedures.
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23. RELATED POLICIES AND LEGISLATION

This policy should be read alongside relevant school policies, including:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Equality Policy;
- SEND Policy;
- Teaching and Learning Policy;
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, where applicable;
- FGM Policy, where applicable; and
- relevant policies concerning child-on-child abuse and harmful sexual behaviour.

Relevant legislation and statutory guidance include:

- Children and Social Work Act 2017;
- Education Act 1996;
- Equality Act 2010;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- statutory guidance relating to Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education; and
- other relevant Department for Education safeguarding and curriculum guidance.

The school will ensure that references to legislation and statutory guidance are reviewed and updated as necessary.

24. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually.

It may be reviewed earlier where:

- statutory guidance changes;
- legislation changes;
- safeguarding concerns identify an emerging need;
- curriculum review identifies a need for amendment; or
- significant feedback is received from pupils, parents, carers, staff or governors.

The school's RSHE curriculum will also be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant, accessible, appropriately sequenced and responsive to pupils' needs.

APPENDIX 1: PRINCIPLES FOR SELECTING AND ADAPTING RSHE CONTENT

When selecting, adapting or introducing RSHE content, staff should consider the following questions.

Curriculum and learning

- Is the content part of the planned statutory or school curriculum?
- What is the intended learning objective?
- Does the content build appropriately on previous learning?
- Is the information accurate and current?
- Is there a clear educational or safeguarding purpose?

Pupil needs

- Will pupils understand the language being used?
- Are appropriate communication supports available?
- Does the teaching take account of pupils' cognitive and developmental understanding?
- Does it take account of chronological age and physical development?
- Is differentiation required?
- Does the content need to be revisited or reinforced?

Safeguarding

- Could the content cause distress to a particular pupil?
- Are there known safeguarding concerns that staff should consider?
- Could the lesson result in a disclosure?
- Do staff know how to respond if a safeguarding concern arises?
- Is the content necessary to help pupils recognise or respond to risk?

Resources

- Has the resource been reviewed before use?
- Is it accurate and appropriate?
- Are any images or descriptions unnecessarily explicit?
- Does it avoid stereotyping, stigma and discriminatory content?
- Can it be adapted appropriately for pupils?
- Is it available for parents and carers to view on request?

Emerging needs

Where teaching is introduced in response to an emerging safeguarding concern, pupil need or significant local or national event, staff should consult the RSHE Subject Lead and, where appropriate, the safeguarding team or Senior Leadership Team.

APPENDIX 2: PARENTAL REQUESTS TO VIEW RSHE RESOURCES

Parents and carers may request to view any resources used to deliver RSHE at Bensham Manor School.

Requests should be directed to the PSHCE/RSHE Subject Lead or a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

The school will:

1. Acknowledge and respond to requests within a reasonable timeframe.
2. Provide access to the relevant resources.
3. Explain the context, learning objectives and intended pupil group where appropriate.
4. Provide an opportunity for parents and carers to raise questions.
5. Make appropriate arrangements for copyrighted materials that cannot legally be distributed electronically or in hard copy.
6. Ensure that resources used by external providers are also available for parents and carers to view.

The school welcomes constructive engagement with parents and carers about RSHE while retaining responsibility for ensuring that pupils receive their statutory curriculum entitlement and essential safeguarding education.