



RELATIONSHIPS, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY

Bricklehurst Manor School

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1. Introduction and Context

This policy is updated to reflect the Department for Education's revised statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, published in July 2025 and coming into force on 1 September 2026. It also aligns with the Independent School Standards applicable to independent specialist schools.

Bricklehurst Manor School is an independent specialist day school for pupils aged 5-14 with complex needs, including autism, ADHD, SEMH, dyspraxia and trauma-related difficulties. Disrupted prior education and atypical development of social understanding necessitate a highly structured and adapted RSHE curriculum that prioritises safeguarding, clarity and explicit teaching of social rules, both offline and online.

Key emphases in the 2026 guidance

- A stronger focus on online safety and harmful content.
- Clearer expectations around sexual harassment and violence.
- Retention of LGBT-inclusive content, including teaching about same-sex parents in primary.
- Enhanced transparency with parents regarding curriculum materials.
- Removal of proposed age cut-offs in favour of professional age/stage-appropriate judgement.

2. Bricklehurst Manor School's Core Values

Our RSHE curriculum is underpinned by British values and promotes equality, safety, self-respect and healthy relationships. We emphasise kindness and sexual ethics beyond consent, and open conversations about positive masculinity and femininity, ensuring no group is stigmatised.

Our aim is that pupils can form and maintain safe, respectful relationships, recognise risk, and seek help promptly.

3. Statutory Requirements

Bricklehurst Manor provides Relationships Education (Primary), Relationships and Sex Education (Secondary) and Health Education for all pupils. Teaching reflects the law, including offences relating to sexual harassment, coercive control and indecent images. Content on online risks now explicitly includes deepfakes, pornography, scams, AI-generated content and misogynistic ideologies.

LGBT content remains integrated across the curriculum, with primary pupils learning about same-sex families as part of family diversity. Parental transparency is strengthened: parents can view all curriculum materials on request, and the school will not use providers that restrict sharing materials with parents.

We comply with the Equality Act 2010. We make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND and regularly review accessibility to ensure inclusivity.

Related policies

This policy should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Equality Policy, and the latest edition of Keeping Children Safe in Education.

4. Policy Development

This policy is developed through proactive consultation with parents/carers, staff and pupils. We will publish the policy on our website and share representative samples of teaching materials. Pupil voice informs curriculum sequencing and responsiveness to local need.

Pupil views will be gathered through surveys, class discussions, school council activities and curriculum reviews. Governors review and ratify the policy annually.

5. Definition

RSHE is the lifelong learning process about physical, moral and emotional development, including relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and identity. RSHE is not the promotion of sexual activity.

Updates for 2026 include explicit coverage of suicide prevention (delivered safely with specialist oversight) and strengthened teaching of sexual ethics: acting with kindness and respect in all relationships, offline and online.

6. Curriculum Delivery

RSHE is taught in discrete RSHE sessions for all age groups. Biological aspects are taught in Science, and ethical/religious aspects in SMSC sessions. RSHE is interwoven through the rest of the curriculum.

RSHE is taught in a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where pupils can discuss sensitive topics respectfully, ask questions without judgement, and feel secure and supported.

Safeguarding concerns arising from RSHE lessons will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff will not offer unconditional confidentiality to pupils and will explain that information may need to be shared where there is a concern about a child's safety or the safety of others.

RSHE teaching reflects the protected characteristics defined within the Equality Act 2010 and promotes respect for all people, regardless of age, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, or marriage and civil partnership.

Primary (KS1-2): Key Content

Relationships Education covers families and people who care for me; caring friendships; respectful relationships; online relationships; and being safe. In addition, we:

- Use correct anatomical vocabulary for all body parts (including genitalia) to support safeguarding and reporting.

- Strongly include same-sex parents when teaching about family diversity, presented as part of normal, loving family life.
- Teach personal safety (including road, rail, water and fire safety), digital privacy and how to report concerns.
- Provide a sensitive, age/stage-appropriate introduction to human reproduction before transition to secondary.

Secondary (KS3-4): Key Content

RSE focuses on families; respectful relationships and friendships; online and media; being safe; intimate and sexual relationships including sexual health; and mental and physical wellbeing. In addition, we:

- Teach the law and ethics of consent, exploitation, grooming, coercion, harassment, domestic abuse, forced marriage, 'honour'-based abuse and FGM; how to seek help for self or others.
- Cover sexual harassment and violence, stalking, pornography (including its distortions), financial sexual exploitation, strangulation and suffocation, and why these are unacceptable and unlawful.
- Explain criminal law relating to indecent images (including youth-produced imagery) and online offences; how to report and remove content.
- Teach STI transmission and prevention, contraception (efficacy, choices), pregnancy options (keeping the baby, adoption, abortion) and access to confidential health services.
- Develop critical digital literacy including deepfakes, AI chatbots, fake accounts, scams, gambling mechanics in gaming, and strategies to disengage and report.
- Include suicide prevention content safely, with trained staff and signposting to support.

SEND Adaptations and Stage-Appropriate Delivery

- Differentiate language, visuals and activities; pre-teach key vocabulary; use concrete social stories and role-play.
- Provide 1:1 or small-group delivery where needed; adjust pacing and revisit concepts regularly.
- Prioritise clarity, literal language and explicit boundaries for pupils who interpret language literally.
- Use professional judgement to teach content when it becomes relevant, or when risks present earlier than anticipated.

Equality and Inclusion

We promote respect for all and value each child. LGBT content is integrated at appropriate points and not delivered as a standalone 'add-on'. Teaching will be factual, age-appropriate, evidence-informed and delivered in accordance with statutory guidance.

Staff will promote respect for all people and will not promote particular political or ideological viewpoints. We provide respectful spaces for questions and clarify where views are contested.

Assessment

Teachers monitor pupils' progress in RSHE through ongoing formative assessment and the school's internal assessment systems, including Evidence for Learning. Assessment is gathered through observation, discussion, questioning, pupil voice and reviews of learning, enabling teachers to track pupils' knowledge,

understanding and skills over time. This information is used to identify next steps, address misconceptions and inform future teaching.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Headteacher	Strategic oversight of the subject and quality assurance; ensuring effective delivery in line with statutory requirements, and that the curriculum is responsive to the school's emerging contextual safeguarding picture.
Subject leader	Ensures consistent delivery, compliance with statutory guidance, transparent engagement with parents, and appropriate staff training.
Staff	Deliver RSHE sensitively; model positive behaviour; monitor progress; respond to individual needs; escalate safeguarding concerns; integrate online safety throughout. Staff cannot opt out of statutory RSHE delivery but will receive training and support.
Pupils	Engage fully and respectfully; seek help when worried about themselves or others; behave safely online and offline.

8. Parents' Right to Request Withdrawal

Parents may request withdrawal of their child from non-statutory elements of sex education up to three terms before the child turns 16. Science National Curriculum content (e.g. human reproduction) is compulsory and not subject to withdrawal.

We will record requests, meet with parents to discuss implications, and provide suitable alternative learning. The school will maintain records of parental consultation, withdrawal meetings, curriculum reviews and staff training relating to RSHE.

In line with 2026 transparency requirements, parents can view all curriculum materials on request; Bricklehurst Manor will not agree to any contractual terms with external providers that prevent sharing materials with parents.

Raising a concern

Any concerns regarding RSHE provision should initially be raised with the RSHE Lead. If concerns remain unresolved, parents may follow the school's Complaints Procedure.

9. Monitoring and Review

The Senior Leadership Team monitors policy implementation and impact annually. Governors review and ratify the policy each year. Parent and pupil feedback, safeguarding data, and curriculum evaluation inform continuous improvement. The policy will be updated sooner if further statutory changes arise or local risks change.

10. Appendix 1 – Content Taught (Primary and Secondary)

The school delivers all end-of-primary and end-of-secondary RSHE outcomes. Content maps include:

Primary	Secondary
- Families and people who care for me - Caring friendships - Respectful relationships - Online relationships - Being safe - Mental wellbeing - Internet safety and harms - Physical health and fitness - Healthy eating - Drugs, alcohol and tobacco - Health and prevention - Basic first aid - Changing adolescent body (including menstrual wellbeing)	- Families - Respectful relationships (including friendships) - Online and media - Being safe - Intimate and sexual relationships (including sexual health) - Mental wellbeing - Internet safety and harms - Physical health and fitness - Healthy eating - Drugs, alcohol and tobacco - Health and prevention - Basic first aid - Changing adolescent body

Curriculum maps signpost where new 2026 content is integrated (e.g. online misogyny, AI deepfakes, personal safety, suicide prevention, strengthened harassment/violence content).

11. Appendix 2 – Brickleyhurst Manor Teaching Approaches

- Appropriate to age and developmental stage; sensitive to SEND and religious backgrounds.
- Delivered discretely within PSHE with small groups or 1:1 where appropriate; targeted workshops provided in response to identified need.
- Responsive to emerging trends and patterns (e.g. harmful online challenges, misogynistic influencers, youth-produced sexual imagery).
- Staff CPD includes: teaching sensitive content; legal updates; digital literacy; managing disclosures; safe suicide prevention education.
- Parents: proactive consultation; access to representative materials; termly curriculum overviews; clear routes to raise questions or concerns.

References

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (DfE)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Equality Act 2010

- Independent School Standards