

Earlscliffe (Earlscliffe Ltd)

Relationships, Sex & Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Member of SLT responsible: Deputy Head (Academic)

Date adopted: October 2025

Review date: June 2025

1. Policy Statement and Rationale

RSHE is central to our school's mission to promote pupils' personal development, safeguarding, wellbeing, and readiness for adult life.

Our curriculum is inclusive, evidence-informed, age-appropriate, and aligned to **DfE statutory guidance (2025 update, mandatory from September 2026)**.

We prepare pupils to develop healthy, safe, respectful relationships; understand consent; manage their physical and mental health; and navigate online and offline risks, including new and emerging issues such as AI and online misogyny.

RSHE sits within our broader **PSHE programme**, contributing to safeguarding, SMSC development, and the promotion of **Fundamental British Values**.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy complies with:

- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Equality Act 2010
- DfE statutory guidance on RSHE (2019, updated 2025) – full implementation required by **Sept 2026**
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (KCSiE)

We also draw on best practice from the **PSHE Association**, the NSPCC, NHS, and local safeguarding partners.

3. Aims and Objectives

Our RSHE curriculum enables pupils to:

- Form healthy, respectful, caring relationships.
 - Understand **consent** in depth, including ethical aspects, power dynamics, coercion, and withdrawal of consent.
 - Recognise and respond to **sexual harassment, coercion, violence, grooming, stalking, sextortion, FGM**, and other harmful sexual behaviours.
 - Navigate online spaces safely, including risks of **AI-generated pornography, deepfakes, image misuse, sextortion, and misogyny**.
 - Develop critical awareness of **pornography**, including its impact, ethics, legality, and influence on relationships.
 - Promote equality and inclusion, respecting diversity in **sexual orientation, gender identity, family structures, and faith backgrounds**, while ensuring RSHE reflects UK law (e.g. marriage equality).
 - Develop resilience, mental wellbeing, and strategies to manage emotions, stress, and peer pressure.
 - Understand the importance of physical health, including puberty, menstrual wellbeing, menopause, contraception, sexual health, substance misuse, and first aid.
 - Know how and where to seek help.
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4. Guiding Principles (DfE 2025)

We commit to the **seven guiding principles**:

1. **Engagement with pupils** (curriculum shaped by pupil voice).
2. **Engagement with parents** (statutory expectation – consultation, transparency, resource sharing).
3. **Positivity** (focusing on healthy and safe relationships, not solely risk).
4. **Curriculum relevance and breadth** (covering contemporary issues such as AI harms, misogyny, porn ethics).
5. **Progressive development** (sequenced, age-appropriate, revisited with maturity).
6. **Safe and inclusive delivery** (ground rules, respect, SEND accessibility, avoiding stigma).
7. **Monitoring and quality assurance** (annual review, governor oversight, pupil voice).

5. Curriculum Content

Secondary (Relationships, Sex & Health Education)

Additional statutory content includes:

- Sexual relationships, contraception, STIs, sexual health
- Consent, power, coercion, sexual harassment, sexual violence
- Online harms: sextortion, AI chatbots, deepfakes, data misuse
- Misogyny, incel culture, gender-based violence
- Pornography: critical thinking, AI-generated porn, ethics, law
- Puberty, menstrual wellbeing, menopause education
- Substance misuse, addiction, risk-taking behaviour
- Mental health, self-harm, suicide prevention strategies
- Respect and inclusion (LGBT+ content integrated, not standalone)
- Rights, responsibilities, UK law

6. Teaching and Delivery

- Delivered by trained staff with specialist CPD in sensitive content and safeguarding.
 - Inclusive approaches for **SEND pupils**, using differentiated resources and alternative formats.
 - Clear **ground rules** and safeguarding protocols in every lesson.
 - **External speakers** (e.g. health professionals) are vetted, aligned to school policy, and accompanied by staff.
 - Lessons are delivered in a **safe environment** using distancing techniques (e.g. scenarios, case studies).
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7. Parental Engagement

- **Now statutory:** we must consult parents, share resources, and explain curriculum sequencing.
 - Termly information sessions and access to lesson overviews.
 - Parents notified of any deviation from the published RSHE plan.
 - Guidance provided to help parents reinforce learning at home.
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8. Right to Withdraw

- Parents may request withdrawal from **sex education** beyond the science curriculum.
 - No withdrawal from **Relationships Education** or **Health Education**.
 - From **age 15½**, pupils may opt into sex education even if parents request withdrawal.
 - Headteachers may refuse withdrawal in exceptional safeguarding cases.
 - Requests must be made in writing; school will discuss options with parents and pupils.
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9. Safeguarding

- RSE is a key part of safeguarding:
 - Abuse, coercion, grooming, sexual harassment, stalking, FGM, harmful sexual behaviours.
 - Recognition and response to online abuse, sextortion, image sharing.
 - Staff will respond to disclosures according to the **Safeguarding Policy** and DSL procedures.
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11. Monitoring & Evaluation

- RSHE reviewed annually (policy, curriculum, delivery).
 - Pupil voice gathered through surveys, focus groups, evaluation forms.
 - Staff reflections and parental feedback inform development.
 - Governors receive annual evaluation reports.
 - Continuous improvement cycle: audit → implement → evaluate → refine.
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12. Staff Training

- Regular CPD covering:
 - Sensitive and inclusive teaching methods.
 - Safeguarding and managing disclosures.
 - New statutory content (porn ethics, AI harms, strangulation law).
 - All RSHE staff to access PSHE Association training/resources.
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13. SEND and Inclusion

- Differentiated teaching and adapted resources for pupils with SEND.
 - Accessible lesson plans (e.g. large print, visuals, simplified text).
 - Inclusive examples reflecting different identities and family structures.
 - Reinforce respect for diversity and challenge prejudice-based bullying.
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14. Communication & Access

- Policy and RSHE curriculum overview published on school website.
- Paper copies available on request.
- Annual parent consultation and update events.

