



New Horizons Children's Academy

PART OF THE THINKING SCHOOLS ACADEMY TRUST



Child first – Challenge – Aspire - Achieve

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

INCEPTION DATE: September 2025

REVIEW DATE: September 2026

RSE Policy

Aims of the policy

To provide pupils with the knowledge, understanding, attitudes, values and skills they need in order to reach their potential as individuals and within the community.

To encourage pupils to take part in a wide range of activities and experiences across and beyond the curriculum, contributing fully to the life of their school and communities. In doing so they learn to recognise their own worth, work well with others and become increasingly responsible for their own learning. They reflect on their experiences and understand how they are developing personally and socially, tackling many of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up.

To learn to understand and respect our common humanity; diversity and differences so that pupils can go on to form the effective, fulfilling relationships that are an essential part of life and learning.

Objectives of the Jigsaw Programme

Jigsaw PSHE will support the development of the skills, attitudes, values and behaviour, which enable pupils to:

- Have a sense of purpose
- Value self and others
- Form relationships
- Make and act on informed decisions
- Communicate effectively
- Work with others
- Respond to challenge
- Be an active partner in their own learning
- Be active citizens within the local community
- Explore issues related to living in a democratic society
- Become healthy and fulfilled individuals

Jigsaw Content

Jigsaw covers all areas of PSHE for the primary phase, as the table below shows:

Term	Puzzle name	Content
Autumn 1:	Being Me in My World	Includes understanding my place in the class, school and global community as well as devising Learning Charters
Autumn 2:	Celebrating Difference	Includes anti-bullying (cyber and homophobic bullying included) and diversity work
Spring 1:	Dreams and Goals	Includes goal-setting, aspirations, working together to design and organise fund-raising events
Spring 2:	Healthy Me	Includes drugs and alcohol education, self-esteem and confidence as well as healthy lifestyle choices

Summer 1:	Relationships	Includes understanding friendship, family and other relationships, conflict resolution and communication skills
Summer 2:	Changing Me	Includes Sex and Relationship Education in the context of looking at change

Definition of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

Since the then Right Honourable Justine Greening, Secretary of State for Education, announced, on March 1st 2017, that it is her intention to make Relationships Education statutory in Primary schools from September 2019, Sex and Relationship Education has now become better known as RSE – Relationship and Sex Education – to reflect the changes that are to come.

‘Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) is lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings’ (Sex Education Forum, 1999). The approach starts early, with primary school children learning about positive relationships between friends and family. This builds the foundation for understanding respect and kindness in all relationships whilst making sure children know how to be safe and recognise what counts as abusive behaviour so they can ask for help if they need it.

Teachers will be supported to bring these topics to life in ways that stay with pupils as they leave the classroom - creating safe spaces where children can have meaningful discussions that have lasting impact.

The guidance sets clear safeguards to ensure teaching remains age-appropriate. This means making sure children do not get taught things they are too young for, whilst allowing teachers to sensitively and safely respond to topics children have encountered on- or off-line.

Medway Public Health provide a range of support and guidance for schools, including training and teaching resources, which enable them to plan and deliver age and stage appropriate high quality RSHE that meets the needs of their pupils.

The guidance makes clear that parents should be able to view all curriculum materials on request. Schools cannot agree to any contractual restrictions with external providers that would prevent parents from seeing content their school plans to use. This transparency ensures you can stay informed about what your child is learning and have conversations at home to support their understanding.

Medway RSHE schemes of work have always been available to parents and carers, either through their child's school or by request via the Child Health Team.

Age-appropriate: Safeguards ensure children are not taught content too early.

Safe spaces: Lessons will encourage open, respectful discussions.

Teacher training: Grants and CPD (continuing professional development) will support teachers in delivering sensitive topics confidently.

New RSHE guidance: Parent and Carer Update (July 2025)

"The right to education includes the right to sexual education, which is both a human right in itself and an indispensable means of realising other human rights, such as the right to health, the right to information and sexual and reproductive rights."

Report to the UN General Assembly - July 2010 | Item 69, paragraph 18

Compulsory aspects of RSE

The sex education contained in National Curriculum science (Key Stages 1–4) is compulsory in maintained schools. All state-funded schools must have ‘due regard’ to the Secretary of State’s guidance on SRE (DfE, 2000). This states that:

- ‘All children, including those who develop earlier than average, need to know about puberty before they experience the onset of physical changes’ (1.13)
- Children should learn ‘how a baby is conceived and born’ before they leave primary school (1.16)

The Learning and Skills Act (2000) and the model funding agreements for academies and free schools require that state-funded schools ensure that within sex education children ‘learn the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and the bringing up of children’, and ‘are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate’. The guidance includes some specific information about meeting the needs of young people, whatever their sexuality, including boys and girls and those with special educational needs.

RSE and statutory duties in school

RSE plays a very important part in fulfilling the statutory duties all schools have to meet. RSE helps children understand the difference between safe and abusive relationships and equips them with the skills to get help if they need it. State-funded schools have responsibilities for safeguarding and a legal duty to promote pupil well-being (Education and Inspections Act 2006 Section 38).

- Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) is an important part of PSHE Education (DfE, 2014).
- When any school provides RSE they must have regard to the [Secretary of State’s guidance](#); this is a statutory duty. Academies do not have to provide RSE but must also have regard to Secretary of State’s guidance when they do (DfE, 2013).
- Ofsted will evaluate how schools help to ensure a healthy lifestyle for their children (Ofsted, 2013, Subsidiary Guidance Para 64).
- It is compulsory for all maintained schools to teach the parts of sex education that fall under National Curriculum Science which must be taught to all pupils of primary and secondary age e.g. the biological aspects of puberty and reproduction (Education Act 1996, National Curriculum 2014).

Updated government safeguarding guidance is now available ([Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2024](#)) and includes a section about being alert to signs that young girls may be at risk of female genital mutilation (FGM). School summer holidays, especially during the transition from primary to secondary school, is thought to be a key risk time for FGM. See also the government [Multi-agency practice guidelines: Female Genital Mutilation \(2020\)](#) which includes a section for schools. Further updates are now available as of July 2025.

RSE has clear links with other school policies aimed at promoting pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, including the:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Confidentiality Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Education Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- ICT Policy and Safe Internet Use Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- RE Policy
- Safeguarding/Child Protection Policy

- SMSC Policy
- Special Educational Needs Policy

The role of the Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to ensure that staff and parents are informed about the RSE policy, and that the policy is implemented effectively. It is also the Headteacher's responsibility to ensure that members of staff are given sufficient training, so that they can teach effectively and handle any difficult issues with sensitivity.

The Headteacher liaises with external agencies regarding the school RSE programme and ensures that all adults who work with children on these issues are aware of the school policy, and that they work within this framework. The Headteacher monitors this policy on a regular basis and reports to governors, when requested, on the effectiveness of the policy.

Monitoring and Review

The sex education policy is monitored by the Link Governor for Curriculum and Enrichment. The Link Governor gives serious consideration to any comments from parents about the sex education programme, and makes a record of all such comments. Governors require the headteacher to keep a written record, giving details of the content and delivery of the RSE programme that is taught in your school. Governors should scrutinise materials to check they are in accordance with the school's ethos.

Equalities

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way the curriculum is delivered, as schools and other education providers must ensure that issues are taught in a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education has produced advice on The Equality Act 2010 and schools (DfE, 2014b).

Schools have a legal duty to promote equality (Equality Act, 2010) and to combat bullying (Education Act, 2006) (which includes homophobic, sexist, sexual and transphobic bullying) and Section 4.2 of the national curriculum (2014) states "Teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment."

Jigsaw RSE Content

The grid below shows specific RSE learning intentions for each year group in the 'Changing Me' Puzzle.

Year Group	Piece Number and Name	Learning Intentions 'Pupils will be able to...'	
FS1/2	Piece 3 Growing Up	D4 - Seek out others to share experiences. Show affection and concern for people who are special to them D6 - Explain own knowledge and understanding, and ask appropriate questions of others ELG - Show sensitivity to others' needs and feelings	
	1	Piece 4 Boys' and Girls' Bodies	identify the parts of the body that make boys different to girls and use the correct names for these: penis, testicles, vagina respect my body and understand which parts are private
		Piece 4 Boys' and Girls' Bodies	recognise the physical differences between boys and girls, use the correct names for parts of the body (penis, testicles, vagina) and appreciate that some parts of my body are private
	2	Piece 1 How Babies Grow	tell you what I like/don't like about being a boy/girl understand that in animals and humans lots of changes happen between conception and growing up, and that usually it is the female who has the Baby express how I feel when I see babies or baby animals
			Piece 2 Babies
		Piece 3 Outside Body Changes	understand that boys' and girls' bodies need to change so that when they grow up their bodies can make babies identify how boys' and girls' bodies change on the outside during this growing up process recognise how I feel about these changes happening to me and know how to cope with those feelings
			Piece 4 Inside Body Changes

4	Piece 2 Having A Baby	correctly label the internal and external parts of male and female bodies that are necessary for making a baby
		understand that having a baby is a personal choice and express how I feel about having children when I am an adult
	Piece 3 Girls and Puberty	describe how a girl's body changes in order for her to be able to have babies when she is an adult, and that menstruation (having periods) is a natural part of this
		know that I have strategies to help me cope with the physical and emotional changes I will experience during puberty
5	Piece 2 Puberty for Girls	explain how a girl's body changes during puberty and understand the importance of looking after myself physically and emotionally
		understand that puberty is a natural process that happens to everybody and that it will be OK for me
	Piece 3 Puberty for Boys and Girls	describe how boys' and girls' bodies change during puberty
		express how I feel about the changes that will happen to me during puberty
	Piece 4 Conception	understand that sexual intercourse can lead to conception and that is how babies are usually made
		understand that sometimes people need IVF to help them have a baby
6		appreciate how amazing it is that human bodies can reproduce in these ways
	Piece 2 Puberty	explain how girls' and boys' bodies change during puberty and understand the importance of looking after myself physically and emotionally
		express how I feel about the changes that will happen to me during puberty
	Piece 3 Girl Talk/Boy Talk	ask the questions I need answered about changes during puberty
		reflect on how I feel about asking the questions and about the answers I receive
	Piece 4 Babies – Conception to Birth	describe how a baby develops from conception through the nine months of pregnancy, and how it is born
		recognise how I feel when I reflect on the development and birth of a baby
	Piece 5 Attraction	understand how being physically attracted to someone changes the nature of the relationship
		express how I feel about the growing independence of becoming a teenager and am confident that I can cope with this

Withdrawal from RSE lessons

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Relationship and Sex Education provided at school except for those parts included in statutory National Curriculum Science. Those parents/carers wishing to exercise this right are invited in to see the head teacher and/or RSE Co-ordinator who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that withdrawal may have on the child. Once a child has been withdrawn they cannot take part in the RSE programme until the request for withdrawal has been removed. Materials are available to parents/carers who wish to supplement the school RSE programme or who wish to deliver RSE to their children at home.

Working with parents and carers

The government guidance on SRE (DfEE 2000) emphasises the importance of schools working in partnership with parents and carers. Under current legislation schools should enable parents/carers to exercise their right to withdraw their children (until the age of 19) from any school RSE taught outside National Curriculum Science (Education Act 1996). This applies to maintained primary and secondary schools and includes pupils attending a sixth form that is part of a school. It does not apply to sixth form colleges and further education colleges. Parents/carers have a legal right to see the school RSE policy and to be given a copy of it (Education Act 1996). Parents/carers should also be aware that schools are legally required to provide a broad and balanced curriculum. Sex and relationships topics can arise incidentally in other subjects, such as Science, and it is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions.

Drug and Alcohol Education

This policy uses the definition that a drug is: 'A substance people take to change the way they feel, think or behave' (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime). The term 'Drugs' includes

- All illegal drugs
- All legal drugs including alcohol, tobacco and volatile substances which can be inhaled
- All over-the-counter and prescription medicines

Effective Drug and Alcohol Education can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils as they grow up. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and well-being.

Drug and Alcohol Education: Moral and Values Framework

The Drug and Alcohol Education programme at our school reflects the school ethos and demonstrates and encourages the following values. For example:

- Respect for self
- Respect for others
- Responsibility for their own actions
- Responsibility for their family, friends, schools and wider community

Jigsaw Drug and Alcohol Education Content

The grid below shows specific Drug and Alcohol Education learning intentions for each year group in the 'Healthy Me' Puzzle.

<i>Year Group</i>	<i>Piece Number and Name</i>	<i>Learning Intentions 'Pupils will be able to...'</i>
2	Piece 3 Medicine Safety	understand how medicines work in my body and how important it is to use them safely

		feel positive about caring for my body and keeping it healthy
3	Piece 3 What Do I Know About Drugs?	tell you my knowledge and attitude towards drugs identify how I feel towards drugs
4	Piece 3 Smoking	understand the facts about smoking and its effects on health, and also some of the reasons some people start to smoke
	Piece 4 Alcohol	can relate to feelings of shame and guilt and know how to act assertively to resist pressure from myself and others understand the facts about alcohol and its effects on health, particularly the liver, and also some of the reasons some people drink alcohol
5	Piece 1 Smoking	can relate to feelings of shame and guilt and know how to act assertively to resist pressure from myself and others know the health risks of smoking and can tell you how tobacco affects the lungs, liver and heart
	Piece 2 Alcohol	make an informed decision about whether or not I choose to smoke and know how to resist pressure know some of the risks with misusing alcohol, including anti-social behaviour, and how it affects the liver and heart
6	Piece 2 Drugs	make an informed decision about whether or not I choose to drink alcohol and know how to resist pressure know about different types of drugs and their uses and their effects on the body particularly the liver and heart
	Piece 3 Alcohol	be motivated to find ways to be happy and cope with life's situations without using drugs evaluate when alcohol is being used responsibly, anti-socially or being misused tell you how I feel about using alcohol when I am older and my reasons for this

How is Jigsaw PSHE organised in school?

Jigsaw brings together PSHE Education, emotional literacy, social skills and spiritual development in a comprehensive scheme of learning. Teaching strategies are varied and are mindful of preferred learning styles and the need for differentiation. Jigsaw is designed as a whole school approach, with all year groups working on the same theme (Puzzle) at the same time. This enables each Puzzle to start with an introductory assembly, generating a whole school focus for adults and children alike.

There are six Puzzles in Jigsaw that are designed to progress in sequence from September to July. Each Puzzle has six Pieces (lessons) which work towards an 'end product', for example, The School Learning Charter or The Garden of Dreams and Goals.

Each Piece has two Learning Intentions: one is based on specific PSHE learning (covering the non-statutory national framework for PSHE Education but enhanced to address children's needs today); and one is based on emotional literacy and social skills development to enhance children's emotional and mental health. The enhancements mean that Jigsaw, the mindful approach to PSHE, is relevant to children living in today's world as it helps them understand and be equipped to cope with issues like body image, cyber and homophobic bullying, and internet safety.

Every Piece (lesson) contributes to at least one of these aspects of children's development. This is mapped on each Piece and balanced across each year group.

Differentiation/SEN

Jigsaw is written as a universal core curriculum provision for all children. Inclusivity is part of its philosophy. Teachers will need, as always, to tailor each Piece to meet the needs of the children in their classes. To support this differentiation, many Jigsaw Pieces suggest creative learning activities that allow children to choose the media with which they work and give them scope to work to their full potential. To further help teachers differentiate for children in their classes with special educational needs, each Puzzle includes a P-level grid with suggested activities for children working at each of those levels.

If any changes are implemented nationally as a result of the Rochford Review, Jigsaw will make the necessary amendments and offer this free update to all of its schools.

Safeguarding

Teachers need to be aware that sometimes disclosures may be made during these sessions; in which case, safeguarding procedures must be followed immediately. Sometimes it is clear that certain children may need time to talk one-to-one after the circle closes. It is important to allow the time and appropriate staffing for this to happen. If disclosures occur, the school's disclosure and/or confidentiality policy is followed.

Assessment

Teachers will be eager to ensure children are making progress with their learning throughout their Jigsaw experience. Therefore, each Puzzle (except Puzzle 1) has a built-in assessment task, usually in Piece 5 or 6. This task is the formal opportunity for teacher assessment, but also offers children the chance to assess their own learning and have a conversation with the teacher about their opinions. The task can usually be used as evidence in the Jigsaw Journal.

Each Puzzle has a set of three level descriptors for each year group:

Working towards

Working at

Working beyond

Reporting to Parents/Carers

Each Puzzle's assessment task and attainment descriptors assist the teacher in reporting meaningful learning progress to parents/carers. The descriptors can be used as a starting point when considering what to write on children's reports.

The Attainment Descriptors

Please be aware that these attainment descriptors are specific to Jigsaw and to year groups. They are designed to give guidance when considering each child's learning journey. They are **not** nationally-recognised. There are no national level descriptors for PSHE.

The Jigsaw philosophy is that children are praised and their achievements celebrated in every Piece. It demands a positive relationship between the teacher and the children which, in itself, values and celebrates each individual. Appropriate time is allocated for this process.

Monitoring and evaluation

The PSHE co-ordinator will monitor delivery of the programme through observation and discussion with teaching staff and discussions with children to ensure consistent and coherent curriculum provision.

Evaluation of the programme's effectiveness will be conducted on the basis of:

- Pupil and teacher evaluation of the content and learning processes
- Staff meetings to review and share experience

External contributors

External contributors from the community, e.g. health promotion specialists, school nurses, social workers, and community police and fire officers, make a valuable contribution to the Jigsaw PSHE programme. Their input should be carefully planned and monitored so as to fit into and complement the programme.

Teachers MUST always be present during these sessions and remain responsible for the delivery of the Jigsaw PSHE programme.

The Learning Environment

Establishing a safe, open and positive learning environment based on trusting relationships between all members of the class, adults and children alike, is vital. To enable this, it is important that 'ground rules' are agreed and owned at the beginning of the year and are reinforced in every Piece – by using The Jigsaw Charter. (Ideally, teachers and children will devise their own Jigsaw Charter at the beginning of the year so that they have ownership of it.) It needs to include the aspects below:

The Jigsaw Charter

- We take turns to speak
- We use kind and positive words
- We listen to each other
- We have the right to pass
- We only use names when giving compliments or when being positive
- We respect each other's privacy (confidentiality)

Teaching Sensitive and Controversial Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues are certain to arise in learning from real-life experience. Teachers will be prepared to handle personal issues arising from the work, to deal sensitively with, and to follow up appropriately, disclosures made in a group or individual setting. Issues that we address that are likely to be sensitive and controversial because they have a political, social or personal impact or deal with values and beliefs include: family lifestyles and values, physical and medical issues, financial issues, bullying and bereavement.

Teachers will take all reasonable, practical steps to ensure that, where political or controversial issues are brought to pupils' attention, they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views. Teachers will adopt strategies that seek to avoid bias on their part and will teach pupils how to recognise bias and evaluate evidence. Teachers will seek to establish a classroom climate in which all pupils are free from any fear of expressing reasonable points of view that contradict those held either by their class teachers or their peers.

Answering Difficult Questions and Sensitive Issues

Staff members are aware that views around RSE- and Drug and Alcohol Education-related issues are varied. However, while personal views are respected, all RSE and Drug and Alcohol Education issues are taught without bias using Jigsaw. Topics are presented using a variety of views and beliefs so that pupils are able to form their own, informed opinions but also respect that others have the right to a different opinion.

Both formal and informal RSE and Drug and Alcohol Education arising from pupils' questions are answered according to the age and maturity of the pupil(s) concerned. Questions do not have to be answered directly, and can be addressed individually later. The school believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in this area and refer to the Child Protection Coordinator if they are concerned.

Our school believes that RSE and Drug and Alcohol Education should meet the needs of all pupils, answer appropriate questions and offer support. In Jigsaw Pieces that cover RSE provision, this should be regardless of their developing sexuality and be able to deal honestly and sensitively with sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Homophobic bullying is dealt with strongly yet sensitively. The school liaises with parents/carers on this issue to reassure them of the content and context.

Involving parents and carers

The school believes that it is important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for the Jigsaw PSHE programme. Parents and carers are/will be given the opportunity to find out about and discuss the Jigsaw PSHE programme through:

- Parent/carer Jigsaw awareness session
- Parents'/carers' evenings
- Involvement in policy development
- Involvement in curriculum development
- Information leaflets/displays

Pupil Consultation

It is useful for pupils to be consulted on their own personal, social and citizenship development. Ask pupils either in individual classes or through the school council what sort of person they would like to be by the time they leave this school; what qualities, skills, attitudes, values are important to them as people?

Develop this further by asking pupils how they feel the school could support them with this, what initiatives the school could implement to support this e.g. friendship benches, peer mentoring systems.

Links to other policies and curriculum areas

We recognise the clear link between Jigsaw PSHE and the following policies, and staff are aware of the need to refer to these policies when appropriate.

- Science curriculum
- Teaching and Learning Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Child Protection Policy

Confidentiality and Child Protection/Safeguarding Issues

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned. If this person believes that the child is at risk or in danger, she/he talks to the named child protection co-ordinator who takes action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. All staff members are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues. The child concerned will be informed that confidentiality is being breached and reasons why. The child will be supported by the teacher throughout the process.

Relationships and online safety

An online relationship is between people who have met online, and in most cases, only know each other via the internet. They can be formed with anyone across the world, throughout different cultures and backgrounds and tend to be created through a common interest or shared experience.

Whilst some of these friendships can be positive, there are a number of risks associated with developing relationships online and children trusting other people they may never have met in real life.

For this reason, it's important to teach children to understand the differences and risks that developing an online relationship can bring in comparison to developing an offline relationship and how to engage with the online world to ensure they remain safe and protected.

At New Horizons we are committed to ensuring that our children are aware of the dangers of the internet and have a dedicated Online Safety Day each year; termly reminders around how to stay safe on the internet and what to do if they feel their safety has been compromised. We do this through our ICT lessons, PSHE lessons and any other curriculum subject which presents a learning opportunity. We aim to ensure that our children are internet safety aware for their time here at New Horizons and into their future lives.