

Marland School

PSHE (Personal, Social, Health Education) Policy

**(including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education,
statutory from September 2020)**

**This policy was adopted by the Governing Body
of**

Marland School on 16th September 2026

Review Date: 16th Sept 2026

Next Review: September '28

*This policy has been revised to reflect the Department for Education statutory RSHE
guidance in force from 1 September 2026.*

1. Context and purpose

At Marland School, Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) is a whole-school entitlement that supports pupils' personal development, safeguarding, wellbeing, relationships, independence and preparation for adult life. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education form statutory elements of this provision.

The school recognises that pupils may have a wide range of social, emotional, communication and learning needs. Teaching is therefore carefully sequenced, adapted and revisited so that statutory knowledge is made accessible without removing important safeguarding content.

This policy has regard to the Department for Education statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, revised in 2025 and in force from 1 September 2026. The revised guidance applies to all schools and schools must have regard to it.

2. Aims

- provide a broad, balanced, relevant and age- and stage-appropriate PSHE and RSHE curriculum;
- help pupils develop safe, respectful and healthy relationships, including online relationships;
- develop pupils' understanding of physical health, mental wellbeing, sexual health and personal safety;
- equip pupils to recognise risk, coercion, exploitation, abuse, harmful behaviour and misinformation and to know how and where to seek help;
- prepare pupils for increasing independence, employment, further education, financial decision-making and adult life;
- promote equality, dignity, respect and understanding of the law;
- ensure pupils with SEND can access the intended curriculum through appropriate adaptation and support; and
- provide a consistent statutory entitlement while allowing skilled teachers to exercise informed professional judgement about the most effective route to learning.

3. Statutory and guidance framework

This policy should be read alongside current school safeguarding, behaviour, equality, SEND, online safety and curriculum policies. It is informed by current statutory requirements and guidance, including:

- Education Act 2002 and Education Act 1996;
- Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019;
- DfE statutory guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, in force from 1 September 2026;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition);
- Equality Act 2010;
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- current DfE behaviour, safeguarding, online safety and Prevent guidance; and
- relevant local safeguarding procedures and school policies.

4. Curriculum approach and resources

Marland uses more than one structured resource to support PSHE and RSHE delivery. This enables teachers to select an approach that is appropriate to the needs, readiness and learning profile of the pupils they teach, while maintaining the school's responsibility to secure full statutory coverage.

4.1 SWEET

SWEET provides a structured programme of PSHE and RSHE learning and is used across the school to support progression, consistency and access to a broad range of personal development themes. Teachers adapt and sequence materials according to pupils' needs.

4.2 NCFE Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Marland School also uses the NCFE Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) resource and qualification materials. NCFE provides a structured suite covering key RSHE themes across Years 7 to 11, supported by schemes of work and sample workbooks. Where appropriate, the qualification route can also provide pupils with recognition of their learning and achievement.

NCFE states that its RSHE qualifications are being updated to reflect the statutory guidance in force from September 2026. The school will therefore ensure that the version of any NCFE materials used is current and that statutory content is fully covered.

4.3 Professional judgement in selecting the approach

The decision whether to use SWEET, NCFE materials, a combination of both, or other approved supplementary resources is made by the individual teacher as a professional judgement, within the school's agreed curriculum framework. This judgement is made in conjunction with relevant curriculum and safeguarding expectations and takes account of:

- the teacher's knowledge, confidence, experience and skill set in delivering the content;
- the age, developmental stage, SEND, communication profile, prior knowledge and learning needs of the pupils;
- known safeguarding vulnerabilities and the need to avoid unnecessary distress while ensuring essential safeguarding knowledge is taught;
- the most appropriate level of structure, accreditation, repetition and practical application for the group or individual; and
- the need to ensure progression and complete coverage of statutory RSHE content.

Professional flexibility does not mean that statutory content is optional. Curriculum leaders retain oversight of coverage and progression so that pupils receive their full entitlement regardless of the resource or delivery route selected.

4.4 Whole-school delivery

Formal PSHE/RSHE lessons are reinforced through tutor work, assemblies, pastoral and key-worker support, residential care activities, safeguarding work, targeted individual sessions and relevant curriculum areas such as Science and Computing. Planned learning and responsive work should complement rather than unnecessarily duplicate each other.

5. Curriculum content

The curriculum is organised as a spiral programme. Content is revisited with increasing depth according to pupils' age, stage, prior learning and needs. The precise sequence may be adapted for classes and individuals, but the school ensures that statutory content is covered.

Core strand	Indicative content	Possible delivery routes
Healthy relationships and RSE	Friendships; families; respectful relationships; boundaries; consent; intimate relationships; contraception; STIs; pregnancy; sexual health; exploitation; coercion; power imbalance; harmful sexual behaviour; sexual harassment; misogyny; violence against women and girls; the law.	SWEET / NCFE / Science / targeted pastoral work
Mental health and wellbeing	Emotional literacy; resilience; self-esteem; help-seeking; loneliness; anxiety; stress; body image; social media; self-harm and eating-disorder awareness; safe and appropriate suicide-prevention education.	SWEET / NCFE / Thrive and pastoral provision / specialist resources
Online life and media literacy	Online relationships; privacy; image sharing; pornography; scams; misinformation and disinformation; harmful influencers and online cultures; AI; chatbots; deepfakes; AI-generated sexual imagery; sextortion; reporting and seeking help.	SWEET / NCFE / Computing / safeguarding work
Physical health and prevention	Healthy lifestyles; nutrition; sleep; physical activity; health services; vaccination; first aid; adolescent development; sexual and reproductive health; prevention and self-care.	SWEET / NCFE / Science / PE
Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping	Alcohol; illegal drugs; medicines; tobacco; vaping; nicotine products; synthetic substances; illicit vapes; risk, peer influence, exploitation, spiking and accessing help.	SWEET / NCFE / targeted safeguarding work
Personal safety and safeguarding	Recognising abuse and exploitation; grooming; consent; trusted adults; reporting; personal boundaries; conflict; violence; weapon/knife safety where appropriate; road, rail and water safety; emergency response.	SWEET / NCFE / assemblies / pastoral and residential work
Identity, equality and respect	Personal identity; protected characteristics; discrimination; respectful disagreement; sexual orientation; biological sex; gender reassignment; different families and relationships; rights and responsibilities; factual teaching of law and contested issues.	SWEET / NCFE / wider curriculum
Economic wellbeing and future life	Careers; employability; goal-setting; CVs and interviews; budgeting; payslips; saving; borrowing; fraud; gambling and financial risk; preparation for independence.	SWEET / NCFE / careers and wider curriculum

6. Relationships and Sex Education

RSE aims to give pupils the knowledge they need to develop healthy, respectful and nurturing relationships of all kinds. Teaching includes the characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships, consent, boundaries, pressure and coercion, intimate and sexual relationships, sexual health and the law.

Teaching about consent will also address the wider qualities of respectful and ethical relationships, including kindness, care, responsibility, vulnerability and the effect of differences in power.

Pornography and other sexualised online content will be addressed in an age- and stage-appropriate way, including how such material may distort expectations about bodies, sex, consent and relationships. Pupils will be taught how to seek help and report concerns.

7. Health Education

Health Education enables pupils to make informed, positive choices about physical and mental health. It includes mental wellbeing, internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, health and prevention, basic first aid and the changing adolescent body.

Teaching will also reflect contemporary risks and knowledge, including sleep and screen use, emerging nicotine and drug products, healthcare navigation, medical consent at an appropriate stage, vaccination, misinformation about health and access to reliable sources of advice.

8. Sensitive and safeguarding-related content

PSHE and RSHE may involve sensitive topics. Teachers establish clear ground rules, avoid requiring pupils to disclose personal experiences and make clear that confidentiality cannot be promised where safeguarding concerns arise.

Sensitive areas including self-harm, eating disorders and suicide prevention will be approached in an age-, stage- and needs-appropriate manner. Where direct teaching about suicide is undertaken, the school will use appropriate specialist advice, evidence-based resources and suitably trained staff. Teaching will avoid detail about methods and unnecessarily graphic or emotive material.

Any disclosure or concern arising from a lesson will be managed in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures and Keeping Children Safe in Education.

9. Inclusion, SEND and accessibility

Marland School is committed to ensuring that all pupils can access PSHE and RSHE. Pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation, abuse, online harms or misunderstanding within relationships; this makes accessible RSHE especially important.

Teachers will take account of pupils' developmental stage, communication needs, cognition, sensory needs, prior experiences and identified vulnerabilities. Reasonable and appropriate adaptations may include:

- visual support, concrete examples and accessible vocabulary;
- repetition, overlearning and revisiting key concepts;
- smaller groups or individual teaching where appropriate;
- pre-teaching or follow-up work;
- additional processing time and checks for understanding;

- careful selection of scenarios and resources; and
- coordination with key adults, pastoral staff and residential care staff.

Adaptation should improve access to the intended learning; it should not remove essential safeguarding knowledge or unnecessarily lower expectations.

10. Equality, respect and contested issues

Marland School promotes respect for every pupil and will teach in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. Pupils will learn about the protected characteristics in an age-appropriate way and will be taught to respect people whose characteristics, families, relationships, beliefs or experiences differ from their own.

Same-sex relationships and different family structures are integrated appropriately within the curriculum rather than treated only as stand-alone topics.

Where teaching addresses biological sex, gender reassignment or gender-related questions, teachers will distinguish clearly between established facts, the law, beliefs and areas of significant public or academic debate. Contested positions will not be presented as established fact. Teaching will be respectful, safeguarding-led and appropriate to pupils' age and developmental stage.

The school recognises that pupils, families and staff may hold different religious or other beliefs. Respectful discussion is encouraged, while discriminatory or abusive behaviour is not accepted.

11. Online safety, AI and emerging technology

Online safety is taught as an integral part of relationships, health and safeguarding education. The curriculum will be reviewed as technology and associated risks develop.

Teaching may include social media, online relationships, privacy, image sharing, pornography, scams, misinformation and disinformation, harmful online communities and influencers, artificial intelligence, AI chatbots, deepfakes, AI-generated sexual imagery, sextortion and the use of technology within coercive or controlling behaviour. Pupils will be taught practical strategies for checking information, protecting themselves, reporting harmful content and seeking support.

12. Parents and carers: consultation, transparency and resources

The school values partnership with parents and carers. Parents and carers will be consulted when the RSE policy is developed or substantially reviewed, and their views will be considered alongside statutory requirements, safeguarding duties and the needs of pupils.

The policy will be made available to parents and carers. The school will provide information about the planned RSHE curriculum and will make RSHE curriculum materials available for parents and carers to view on request, including representative materials where appropriate. Where external providers or resources are used, the school remains responsible for checking suitability and curriculum alignment.

13. Right to request withdrawal from sex education

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of RSE, other than sex education that forms part of the National Curriculum for Science.

A request should be made to the Headteacher. The school will discuss the request with the parent or carer, explain the nature and purpose of the curriculum and consider the pupil's needs and circumstances. Except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the request up to and

until three terms before the pupil turns 16. From that point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education, the school will make arrangements for this to happen.

Pupils withdrawn from sex education will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the relevant lesson.

14. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body	Approves and reviews the policy; provides appropriate challenge and oversight; assures itself that statutory requirements are met.
Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team	Ensures implementation, appropriate staffing, safeguarding alignment, parental engagement and access to suitable resources.
Curriculum / PSHE lead	Maps statutory coverage; monitors progression and quality; supports staff; reviews SWEET, NCFE and supplementary resources; identifies gaps and coordinates updates.
Teachers and other staff delivering PSHE/RSHE	Use professional judgement within this policy; plan and adapt appropriately; maintain safe classroom practice; record or communicate safeguarding concerns; contribute to monitoring and curriculum review.
Designated Safeguarding Lead and safeguarding team	Provide advice on sensitive content, emerging risks and individual vulnerabilities and respond to safeguarding concerns arising from teaching.

15. Monitoring, assessment and review

The school will monitor PSHE and RSHE through curriculum mapping, work scrutiny where appropriate, learning visits, staff discussion, pupil voice, assessment information, safeguarding intelligence and review of curriculum resources. Monitoring will consider both statutory coverage and whether pupils are developing the knowledge and skills needed to keep themselves and others safe.

Where teachers use different delivery routes, curriculum oversight will ensure that this flexibility does not create gaps or unnecessary repetition. SWEET and NCFE materials will be reviewed against current statutory expectations and adapted or supplemented where necessary.

This policy will normally be reviewed annually and sooner where legislation, statutory guidance, safeguarding learning or significant curriculum changes require it.

16. Key references

- Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education - statutory guidance, revised 2025 and in force from 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education - current edition.
- Equality Act 2010.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years.
- NCFE: Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) resources and qualifications.
- SWEET: PSHE/RSHE teaching and learning resources.