Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Reviewed and Updated: June 2026 (For Implementation September 2026)

1. Context and Statutory Framework

This policy has been prepared in full consultation with key stakeholders, including parents, staff, and governors, to meet the statutory requirements introduced by the Department for Education (DfE).

As required by the DfE's statutory guidance, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025, mandatory for September 2026), all primary schools must provide an up-to-date RSHE policy made available for inspection and accessible free of charge to parents on the school website.

This policy operates in conjunction with the school's wider curriculum and aligns with the following policies:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy
- Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety (E-Safety) Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy

2. Definitive Distinctions of the Three Strands

To maintain transparency and compliance with statutory review guidelines, Cobden Primary School strictly separates RSHE into three distinct delivery strands:

- **I. Relationships Education (Statutory):** This strand focuses on the fundamental building blocks of positive, healthy relationships. It covers family structures, friendships, respectful relationships, boundaries, conflict resolution, online safety, and how to recognise unsafe or unhealthy relationships. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Relationships Education.
- **II. Health Education (Statutory):** This strand teaches children to make informed decisions about their own physical and mental health. Crucially, the DfE's statutory guidance mandates that teaching about puberty—including the physical and emotional changes of adolescence, menstruation, personal hygiene, and the correct anatomical names for external body parts—falls strictly within Health Education. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from Health Education.
- **III. Sex Education (Non-Statutory):** In the primary context, Sex Education is narrowly defined as teaching about human reproduction—specifically, how a baby is conceived and born. This content is explicitly contained within only two specific lessons in the Jigsaw scheme. Parents hold the right to request that their child be withdrawn from these non-statutory lessons.

3. Aims, Values, and School Ethos

RSHE at Cobden Primary School is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral, and emotional development. It is rooted as part of our school values and is structured around clear values of respect, equality, and safety.

Our curriculum aims to:

- Provide accurate, age-appropriate knowledge to which all pupils are entitled.
- Deconstruct gender stereotypes, foster an environment that respects diversity and protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, and proactively prevent harassment and harmful attitudes towards women and girls.
- Equip pupils with a consistent decision-making framework via the Safety STAR framework (Stop, Think, Assess, React) to navigate physical and online risks.
- Foster emotional literacy, resilience, self-esteem, and positive body image.

4. Inclusion and SEND Provision

Every child is entitled to receive RSHE regardless of ethnicity, gender, culture, religion, language, sexuality, or socio-economic disadvantage. In accordance with our SEND policy, provision is differentiated to ensure all pupils have full access to the curriculum.

5. Curriculum Delivery and Organisation

RSHE is delivered systematically as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum using the accredited Jigsaw 3–11 Scheme of Work. Lessons are facilitated by class teachers, who receive dedicated Continuing Professional Development (CPD) led by the PSHE Co-ordinator.

- **The Safety STAR Framework and Safeguarding:** Safeguarding messages are embedded across all units. Children are taught the explicit distinction between "worry secrets" and "good secrets". They are encouraged to identify an "inner circle" of multiple trusted adults to build a robust support network. Jigsaw's updated messaging focuses on persistent help-seeking: "keep telling until someone helps," accompanied by proactive signposting to independent services such as Childline.
- **Anatomical Terminology as Safeguarding:** The mandatory teaching of correct anatomical terms for genitalia is an established safeguarding practice. It is designed to equip children with the precise vocabulary needed to identify and report abuse.
- **Online Safety and Digital Harms:** Digital literacy is integrated dynamically throughout the Relationships, Celebrating Difference, and Healthy Me Puzzles. Pupils in Key Stage 2 explicitly evaluate online financial risks (such as in-game purchases and digital spending), algorithm targeting, AI-generated material (including digital filters), and the long-term impact of a digital footprint.
- **Substance Education and Hygiene:** Physical health lessons explicitly incorporate contemporary risks, addressing vaping and nicotine pouches (snus) alongside tobacco and alcohol awareness. Personal hygiene is systematically reinforced from the early years, with expanded puberty-related hygiene modules in upper Key Stage 2.
- **Representation of Families and LGBT Content:** In compliance with DfE expectations and the Equality Act 2010, a wide range of family structures—including single-parent, same-sex, blended, adoptive, and foster families—are represented naturally across all year groups through stories and visual materials. This ensures all children see their own home environments validated positively. The terms 'gay' and

'heterosexual' are introduced from Year 3 strictly in the context of who adults love and choose to marry or form civil partnerships with, as well as during anti-bullying education. These terms are never taught in the context of sexual activity.

- **Gender Identity Guardrails:** In alignment with statutory directives, Cobden Primary School takes a cautious, respectful approach to gender identity. While all individuals with protected characteristics are treated with complete dignity, contested views are not taught as fact, clinical terminology is avoided, and gender stereotypes are actively challenged without introducing the concept of social transition.

6. Dealing with Sensitive Questions

To establish a safe learning environment, teachers utilise strict ground rules during every RSHE session. When a pupil asks a sensitive, complex, or unexpected question, the school operates the following protocol:

- The teacher will validate and praise the question within the classroom context, ensuring the child is never made to feel ashamed or embarrassed for asking.
- If the question falls outside the age-appropriate scope of the current year group's curriculum or points toward non-statutory sex education content, the teacher will address the pupil individually outside the lesson.
- The teacher will inform the child's parents/carers of the query, equipping them with the vocabulary and context to safely continue the conversation at home.
- Anonymous questions using our worry monsters are utilised systematically throughout Key Stage 2 to manage anxieties.
- Where a question triggers a child protection or safeguarding concern, the teacher will not promise confidentiality and will immediately follow the standard procedure outlined in our Child Protection Policy, signposting to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).
- Specifically, if a child's question indicates exposure to inappropriate online material (such as pornography), this will trigger an immediate safeguarding response.

7. Parental Engagement and the Right to Request Withdrawal

We recognise that parents and carers are the primary educators for their children regarding relationships and growth. To ensure transparency, Cobden Primary School provides parents with access to the online Jigsaw Parent Portal and hosts designated presentation meetings ahead of the summer term Changing Me Puzzle. A representative sample of all teaching resources and media is made available for parents to view upon request.

Process for Withdrawal from Non-Statutory Sex Education Parents have the statutory right to request that their child be withdrawn from non-statutory Sex Education lessons taught within the Jigsaw PSHE framework. The only two lessons from which a child can be withdrawn are:

- **Year 5:** Changing Me – Piece 4 (Conception)
- **Year 6:** Changing Me – Piece 3 (Babies: Conception to Birth)

To request withdrawal, parents must submit a formal request to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will arrange a meeting with the parents to discuss the request, outline the benefits of receiving this context-driven education alongside peers, and establish alternative educational provision for the child during those specific sessions. There is no right of withdrawal from any National Curriculum Science units, statutory Relationships Education, or statutory Health Education (including puberty, anatomy, and menstruation).

8. Monitoring, Evaluation, and Review

The implementation and effectiveness of the RSHE curriculum is systematically monitored by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), the PSHE Co-ordinator, and the Governing Body. Monitoring exercises include:

- Regular sampling of teacher planning and Jigsaw Journals.
- Learning walks and lesson observations.
- Pupil voice evaluations conducted through focus groups and School Council feedback.
- Feedback surveys from parents following information events.

This policy text and the accompanying curriculum map are subject to formal annual review to ensure ongoing compliance with emerging national research and statutory guidance.

Appendix: Jigsaw PSHE 3-11 Curriculum Map (Updated 2026)

This map outlines the specific learning intentions across the six Puzzles, updated in full compliance with the 2026 Jigsaw framework.

Year Group	**Being Me in My World (Aut 1)**	**Celebrating Difference (Aut 2)**	**Dreams and Goals (Spr 1)**	**Healthy Me (Spr 2)**	**Relationships (Sum 1)**	**Changing Me (Sum 2)**
EYFS	Understanding feelings, belonging, unique identities, school rules, and responsibilities.	Identifying strengths; understanding that differences make us special and family groups vary.	Tackling challenges, perseverance, setting simple goals, and exploring future aspirations.	Exercise, healthy eating choices, the importance of sleep, handwashing, and stranger safety.	Family roles, making friends, resolving conflicts, and managing feelings with calm time.	Naming basic external body parts; understanding growth cycles from baby to adult.
Year 1	Safe and special classroom environments; rights, choices, and	Identifying similarities/differences; identifying bullying behaviours and trusted adults.	Simple goal setting, partner teamwork, stretching learning, and	Cleanliness, medicine safety, road safety (Green Cross Code), and	Family tracking, qualities of a good friend, appropriate touch	Animal and human life cycles; identifying personal changes. Anatomy

Year Group	Being Me in My World (Aut 1)	Celebrating Difference (Aut 2)	Dreams and Goals (Spr 1)	Healthy Me (Spr 2)	Relationships (Sum 1)	Changing Me (Sum 2)
	learning consequences.		celebrating shared success.	appreciating our bodies.	boundaries, and school helpers.	focus: Naming external body parts excluding internal reproductive terms.
Year 2	Hopes, fears, school belonging, democratic choices, and class charters.	Assumptions: Challenging early gender stereotypes. Understanding difference and diversity safely.	Restructured: Being Healthy and Being Relaxed moved here to link health habits to personal dreams.	New Lessons: Keeping Safe at Home (fire safety, kitchen hazards, Stop Drop Roll). Safe Outside (railways, roads, water hazards). Safety STAR tool introduced.	Family cooperation, acceptable vs unacceptable touch, handling secrets ("worry" vs "good"), and community trust.	Natural ageing process; physical differences between boys and girls. Anatomy focus: Correct naming of private parts and understanding privacy lines.
Year 3	Personal worth, facing new challenges positively, and community rule frameworks.	Family differences, witnessing bullying, understanding the impact of hurtful language, and showing respect.	Overcoming challenges, tracing ambition paths, and navigating group dynamic obstacles.	Exploring drug attitudes; calling emergency services. Significant change: Water Safety Code, cold water shock management, and Safety STAR application.	Thinking Critically: Evaluating global connections, trade, inequality, and human rights allocations.	Restructured: Babies lesson removed. New Lesson: Keeping Ourselves Clean (puberty hygiene). Challenging family stereotypes.
Year 4	School community roles, democracy via School	Identifying first impressions, tracing unique physical traits, and stopping	Managing disappointment, building emotional resilience,	New Lesson: Staying Safe with Friends	Friendship shifts, negotiating internal group	New Lessons: Unique Me (identity, heritage)

Year Group	Being Me in My World (Aut 1)	Celebrating Difference (Aut 2)	Dreams and Goals (Spr 1)	Healthy Me (Spr 2)	Relationships (Sum 1)	Changing Me (Sum 2)
	Council, and understanding collective voting.	cyber-bullying trends.	and breaking down multi-step group plans.	(peer pressure, rail/fire safety). Vaping risks, social media image filters, and AI impacts.	conflict, loss and mementos, and healthy relationship choices.	and Being Part of a Family (structures, support signposts). Note: Sex Education completely removed from this year group.
Year 5	Rights of global citizens, empathy for refugees, and managing behavioural choices.	Cultural conflicts, addressing racism, and analysing direct vs indirect bullying paths.	New Lesson: Keeping Track of Money (in-game financial risks, digital spending, saving mentalities).	Health risks of smoking, alcohol processing via liver/heart, and basic emergency first aid protocols.	Social networking safety, computing boundaries, managing screen time impacts, and identifying grooming risks.	Inside Body Changes (reordered puberty lessons). Anatomy focus: Male and female reproductive systems. Piece 4: Conception (Non-Statutory Sex Education - Withdrawal Applies).
Year 6	Children's rights global realities, local choices, and legal vs illegal actions.	Perception patterns of "normal", gender diversity respect, analysing power struggles, and explicitly addressing misogyny.	Setting realistic out-of-school milestones and designing community support initiatives.	Vaccine health choices, drug classifications, exploitation hazards, and stress triggers.	Digital safety judgements, managing real vs fake information online, and peer pressure defence.	My Self Image (emotional health text), puberty and personal hygiene deep dive. Piece 3: Conception to Birth (Non-Statutory Sex Education - Withdrawal Applies).

Year Group	Being Me in My World (Aut 1)	Celebrating Difference (Aut 2)	Dreams and Goals (Spr 1)	Healthy Me (Spr 2)	Relationships (Sum 1)	Changing Me (Sum 2)
						Secondary transitions.