

Thwaites School

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX EDUCATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION POLICY
2026 - 2027

THWAITES SCHOOL

Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education Policy

2026/2027

At the time of publishing the following roles were held:	
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Date:	22/09/2026
Review date:	22/09/2027

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Review Table				
Version	Description of Change	Date	Approved By	Next Review
1.0	Policy fully reviewed and updated in line with revised statutory RSHE guidance for September 2026 and current school curriculum arrangements.	22/09/2026	Curriculum Link Governor	22/09/2027

This policy will be reviewed at least annually, and sooner where there are significant changes to relevant legislation, statutory guidance, the school's curriculum or other circumstances which require it to be updated.

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1. Aims and Statutory Context

At Thwaites School, we aim to provide high-quality, age-appropriate **Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)** which supports pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to lead safe, healthy and fulfilling lives.

Our RSHE provision aims to help pupils:

- develop healthy, respectful and positive relationships with others;
- understand the importance of families, friendships, kindness, respect and appropriate boundaries;
- understand how to keep themselves and others safe, including online;
- develop confidence in seeking help and knowing where support is available;
- develop an age-appropriate understanding of physical and emotional health and wellbeing;
- understand the changes associated with growing up and puberty at an appropriate stage;
- respect themselves and others and recognise that families and individuals may be different; and
- prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Relationships Education is **statutory for all pupils receiving primary education**, and Health Education is statutory in state-funded primary schools. Thwaites School also provides age-appropriate sex education where this supports pupils' preparation for adolescence and transition to secondary education.

This policy has been developed with regard to the **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance**, including the revised guidance applicable from September 2026, and relevant statutory duties including the **Equality Act 2010** and safeguarding requirements.

Relationships, sex and health education at Thwaites School forms part of a **planned, progressive and age-appropriate curriculum**. Teaching builds on pupils' prior learning and takes account of their age, maturity and individual needs.

The school uses **Kapow Primary** to support the planning and delivery of its RSHE curriculum, alongside relevant statutory curriculum requirements and professional judgement about the needs of pupils at Thwaites School.

The school recognises the important role of parents and carers as the first educators of their children in matters relating to relationships, health and growing up. We aim to work positively with parents and carers and provide clear information about what pupils are taught.

2. Curriculum Organisation and Delivery

Relationships, Sex and Health Education at Thwaites School is delivered as part of a **planned and progressive curriculum**, supported by the **Kapow Primary** scheme of work.

The curriculum is sequenced so that pupils develop their knowledge and understanding over time. Teaching is appropriate to pupils' **age, stage of development and individual needs**, and builds on previous learning.

At Thwaites School:

- RSHE within **EYFS and Key Stage 1** is delivered by the EYFS/KS1 teacher;
- RSHE within **Key Stage 2** is delivered by the KS2 teacher and the Headteacher;
- teaching takes place at appropriate points throughout the planned curriculum and is **not restricted to a particular term or period of the school year**; and
- additional teaching may take place where appropriate in response to pupils' needs, questions or issues arising within school or the wider community.

As Thwaites School operates mixed-age classes, pupils may be **taught separately by year group where appropriate**. This enables particular content to be delivered at an age and stage appropriate level and ensures that pupils receive the learning intended for their year group.

The school will use professional judgement when determining appropriate groupings for particular lessons. This may include whole-class, year-group, small-group or individual teaching where appropriate to the content and needs of pupils.

Teachers will establish a **safe and respectful learning environment** in which pupils are encouraged to participate appropriately, listen to others and understand that people may have different experiences, families and views.

Teaching will be inclusive and accessible to all pupils. Appropriate adjustments will be made for pupils with **special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)** and other individual needs, while maintaining high expectations for their participation and learning.

Resources, including those provided through Kapow Primary, will be considered by the school before use to ensure that they are **appropriate for the age and maturity of pupils**, meet the needs of the children being taught and support the school's statutory responsibilities.

RSHE will complement learning elsewhere in the curriculum, including **science, computing, physical education and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE)**, as well as the school's wider work on safeguarding, wellbeing, behaviour and relationships.

3. Curriculum Content

The curriculum at Thwaites School distinguishes between **statutory Relationships Education and Health Education**, content taught through the **National Curriculum for Science**, and any **additional sex education** provided by the school.

This distinction is important because different statutory requirements and parental rights apply to each area.

3.1 Relationships Education

Relationships Education is statutory for pupils receiving primary education. At Thwaites School, pupils are taught the knowledge and skills needed to develop safe, healthy and respectful relationships.

In an age-appropriate and carefully sequenced way, teaching includes:

- families and the different ways in which families may provide love, security and care;
- caring friendships and the characteristics of healthy friendships;
- respect, kindness, honesty, permission-seeking and appropriate boundaries;
- recognising healthy and unhealthy behaviours within relationships;
- how to respond to difficulties in friendships and relationships;
- how to seek help and report concerns;
- personal privacy and appropriate boundaries;
- keeping safe in relationships with others, including online; and
- treating others with respect, including those whose families, characteristics or experiences may be different from their own.

Teaching will reflect the school's safeguarding responsibilities and will help pupils develop the knowledge and vocabulary they need to recognise when something is wrong and seek help from a trusted adult.

3.2 Health Education

Health Education is statutory at Thwaites School and supports pupils' understanding of their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Age-appropriate teaching includes areas such as:

- mental wellbeing and emotional health;
- physical health and fitness;
- healthy eating;
- drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping, including the risks of nicotine products;
- health and prevention;
- personal safety, including hazards and safety around roads, railways and water;
- basic first aid;
- the changing adolescent body, including puberty and menstruation; and
- appropriate aspects of online safety and the impact of technology on health and wellbeing.

Teaching about puberty will prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes they may experience and will use clear, factual and age-appropriate language.

3.3 National Curriculum Science

Some learning relating to bodies, growth and reproduction forms part of the **National Curriculum for Science** and is therefore statutory.

This includes relevant age-appropriate learning about:

- the human body and its development;
- growth and change from birth to old age, including puberty; and
- reproduction and life cycles within the science curriculum.

The school will ensure that pupils receive the science curriculum to which they are entitled.

3.4 Sex Education

Sex education beyond the statutory Relationships and Health Education curriculum and National Curriculum Science is **not compulsory in primary schools**. Thwaites School provides age-appropriate sex education in Years 5 and 6 to support pupils' understanding of human reproduction and their preparation for secondary education.

The school teaches the **Kapow Primary RSE & PSHE curriculum in full**, including the additional sex education content provided within the scheme.

The school will use Kapow Primary's curriculum guidance to support its planning but remains responsible for identifying which content constitutes non-statutory sex education and is subject to parental withdrawal. Information provided to parents and carers will identify the content and year groups in which it is taught.

The school will:

- ensure that content is appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development;
- teach pupils separately by year group where appropriate to ensure age-appropriate delivery;
- ensure teaching is factual, sensitive and respectful;
- review resources before they are used with pupils;
- inform parents and carers **in advance**, normally by email or text message, when pupils are due to receive sex education from which there is a right to request withdrawal;
- make clear which lessons are subject to the right to request withdrawal; and
- provide parents and carers with information about the curriculum and access to teaching materials in accordance with statutory guidance.

The parental right to request withdrawal applies only to **non-statutory sex education**. It does not apply to statutory Relationships Education, Health Education or content taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science.

4. Parents and Carers

Thwaites School recognises that parents and carers are the **first educators of their children** and play an important role in helping children develop their understanding of relationships, health and growing up.

The school aims to work openly and positively with parents and carers so that they understand what is being taught and can support their child's learning.

Parents and carers will be provided with information about the school's RSHE curriculum and may contact the school if they have questions or concerns about its content or delivery.

Before pupils receive **non-statutory sex education**, the school will inform parents and carers in advance, normally by **email or text message**. This communication will identify the relevant teaching and make clear where the parental right to request withdrawal applies.

The school will show parents and carers a representative sample of planned RSHE resources and make all RSHE teaching materials available to view on request. Requests should be made to the Headteacher. Where

parents cannot access materials electronically or attend a presentation, suitable alternative arrangements will be made. Copyright requirements will be respected but will not be used as a reason to refuse access.

4.1 Right to Withdraw from Sex Education

Parents and carers **do not have the right to withdraw their child from:**

- statutory Relationships Education;
- statutory Health Education; or
- content taught as part of the National Curriculum for Science.

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from **non-statutory sex education** provided by the school.

Thwaites School remains responsible for identifying which content constitutes non-statutory sex education and is subject to parental withdrawal, using Kapow Primary's curriculum guidance to support this process. Parents and carers will be told which content and lessons are subject to withdrawal before teaching takes place.

A parent or carer wishing to withdraw their child should make the request to the **Headteacher**.

The Headteacher will offer an opportunity to discuss the request with the parent or carer so that:

- the nature and purpose of the curriculum can be explained;
- the parent or carer can understand exactly which teaching is subject to the right to withdraw;
- any questions or concerns can be discussed; and
- the potential benefits of the teaching and implications of withdrawal can be considered.

In a primary school, a request to withdraw a pupil from non-statutory sex education **will be granted**. The discussion with parents or carers is intended to support informed decision-making and is not a requirement for them to justify their decision.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will ensure that they receive **appropriate and purposeful alternative education** during the relevant lesson or lessons.

The school will keep an appropriate record of withdrawal requests and the arrangements made.

4.2 Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers

The school will seek to maintain constructive communication with parents and carers about RSHE and will:

- provide clear information about the curriculum and how it is delivered;
- inform parents and carers about non-statutory sex education before it is taught;
- respond to reasonable requests for further information about curriculum content and resources;
- listen to questions, concerns and feedback from parents and carers; and

- proactively engage and consult parents and carers when developing and reviewing this policy, including consultation about the content of non-statutory sex education.

5. Inclusion, SEND and Equality

Thwaites School is committed to ensuring that Relationships, Sex and Health Education is **inclusive, accessible and appropriate for all pupils**.

Teaching will take account of pupils' age, stage of development, individual circumstances and additional needs. The school will make appropriate adaptations and reasonable adjustments to enable pupils with **special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)** to access and understand the curriculum.

Where appropriate, this may include:

- adapting teaching approaches, language or resources;
- providing additional explanation, repetition or opportunities to revisit learning;
- using appropriate visual or other supportive resources;
- considering the most appropriate grouping of pupils; and
- working with parents or carers and relevant staff where a pupil has particular needs or vulnerabilities.

The school recognises that some pupils with SEND may be particularly vulnerable to exploitation, bullying or abuse. Teaching will therefore support pupils to develop an appropriate understanding of **personal boundaries, consent, appropriate and inappropriate behaviour, recognising unsafe situations and seeking help**.

5.1 Equality and Respect

Thwaites School will comply with its duties under the **Equality Act 2010** when planning and delivering RSHE. Teaching will not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment and will promote **equality, dignity and respect**.

Pupils will learn that families and individuals may be different and that everyone should be treated with kindness and respect.

When teaching about families, the school will recognise that pupils may come from a variety of family circumstances and will use examples that reflect this appropriately. This may include families with **same-sex parents**, alongside other family arrangements.

Teaching about equality, relationships and families will be:

- appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development;
- factual and sensitive;
- consistent with the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010;
- supportive of the school's wider approach to safeguarding, behaviour and preventing bullying; and
- delivered in a way that promotes respect for others.



Where matters relating to **biological sex, gender reassignment or gender identity** arise within the curriculum or through pupils' questions, staff will respond in an age-appropriate and factual way, having regard to current statutory guidance and the law. Where an issue is complex or outside the planned curriculum, staff may explain that they will seek further guidance before responding.

6. Safe Teaching, Questions and Safeguarding

Relationships, Sex and Health Education will be taught within a **safe, respectful and supportive learning environment**. Staff will establish appropriate ground rules so that pupils understand the importance of listening to others, respecting privacy and discussing sensitive subjects appropriately.

Teaching will use **clear, factual and age-appropriate language**. Pupils will be encouraged to ask questions and to seek help when they are worried or unsure about something.

6.1 Responding to Pupils' Questions

The school recognises that pupils may ask questions about relationships, bodies, sex or other sensitive matters, including questions which go beyond the content planned for their age group.

Staff will respond to questions in a way that is:

- appropriate to the pupil's age, maturity and developmental stage;
- factual and consistent with the school's curriculum and statutory responsibilities;
- sensitive to the needs and experiences of pupils; and
- appropriate for the setting in which the question is asked.

Where a question is not appropriate to answer in front of the whole class, staff may respond to the pupil separately or at another appropriate time.

Staff will not feel required to answer a question immediately where they are unsure whether, or how, it should be answered. They may seek advice from the **Headteacher or Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** before responding.

The school will not discourage appropriate questions simply because they are sensitive. Pupils will be supported to understand where they can obtain **safe and reliable information** rather than seeking answers from inappropriate or potentially harmful sources.

Where a pupil asks a question about sex education from which they have been withdrawn, staff will respond sensitively, taking account of the withdrawal and the pupil's welfare. This may include encouraging discussion with a parent or carer, identifying another trusted adult or signposting appropriate support. Any safeguarding concern will be acted on immediately.

6.2 Safeguarding and Confidentiality

RSHE forms an important part of the school's approach to **safeguarding and preventative education**.

Teaching will help pupils understand appropriate boundaries, recognise unsafe or inappropriate behaviour, know how to seek help and understand that they should continue to seek help until they are heard.

Teaching will make clear that abuse is never the child's fault and that seeking help is always appropriate.

Pupils will be reminded that staff **cannot promise to keep information confidential** where there is a concern about a pupil's safety or welfare.

If a pupil makes a disclosure or says something which raises a safeguarding concern, staff will:

- listen carefully and respond appropriately;
- avoid promising confidentiality;
- not investigate the matter themselves;
- make an appropriate record; and
- report the concern immediately in accordance with the school's Child Protection Policy and Procedures.

Staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures and **Keeping Children Safe in Education** when responding to concerns or disclosures. The 2026 edition of KCSIE comes into force on 1 September 2026, alongside the revised RSHE guidance.

Information arising from RSHE lessons will be handled with an appropriate level of confidentiality and shared only with those who need to know in order to safeguard and support the pupil.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

The successful delivery of Relationships, Sex and Health Education is a shared responsibility. The school will ensure that those involved understand their role in providing a **safe, appropriate and effective curriculum**.

7.1 The Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- approve this policy and ensure that it is reviewed regularly;
- ensure that the school meets its statutory responsibilities for Relationships and Health Education;
- ensure that any additional sex education provided by the school is appropriate and consistent with this policy;
- support and appropriately challenge the school in relation to the quality and effectiveness of RSHE provision; and
- ensure that appropriate consideration is given to safeguarding, equality, SEND and parental engagement.

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher has overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy and will:

- ensure that RSHE is planned and delivered in accordance with statutory requirements and this policy;
- oversee the organisation and delivery of the curriculum;
- ensure that staff have appropriate knowledge, resources and support to deliver RSHE effectively;

- ensure that resources used by the school are appropriate for pupils' age and stage of development;
- ensure that parents and carers receive appropriate information about the curriculum;
- manage requests for withdrawal from non-statutory sex education in accordance with **section 4.1 of this policy**;
- support staff in responding to sensitive or complex questions and safeguarding concerns; and
- monitor the effectiveness of the school's RSHE provision.

7.3 Teaching Staff

Staff responsible for delivering RSHE will:

- follow the school's agreed curriculum and this policy;
- use the **Kapow Primary** curriculum and resources as planned by the school;
- ensure teaching is age-appropriate, factual, inclusive and sensitive;
- adapt teaching appropriately to meet pupils' individual needs, including those with SEND;
- establish a safe and respectful environment for discussion;
- respond appropriately to pupils' questions;
- follow the school's safeguarding procedures where concerns or disclosures arise;
- consider the suitability of resources before using them with pupils; and
- raise any concerns about curriculum content, resources or individual pupils with the Headteacher or DSL as appropriate.

At Thwaites School, RSHE within **EYFS and Key Stage 1** is delivered by the **EYFS/KS1 teacher**, while RSHE within **Key Stage 2** is delivered by the **KS2 teacher and the Headteacher**, as set out in section 2 of this policy.

8. Monitoring, Assessment and Evaluation

Thwaites School will monitor the delivery and effectiveness of its Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum to ensure that it remains **appropriate, progressive and responsive to pupils' needs**.

Teachers will assess pupils' learning through normal classroom practice. This may include discussion, questioning, observation and pupils' work. Assessment will focus on pupils' **knowledge and understanding**, rather than their personal experiences, beliefs or family circumstances.

Teachers will use assessment to:

- identify what pupils already know and understand;
- identify misconceptions or gaps in knowledge;
- check that pupils have understood key learning;
- inform future teaching and appropriate adaptations; and
- ensure that learning builds appropriately as pupils progress through the school.

The school will not require pupils to disclose **personal or private information** in order to demonstrate their understanding.

The Headteacher will monitor RSHE provision through appropriate means, which may include:

- reviewing curriculum planning and coverage;
- discussion with teaching staff;
- considering pupils' learning and work where appropriate;
- listening to the views of pupils in an age-appropriate way;
- considering feedback from parents and carers; and
- reviewing the suitability and effectiveness of curriculum resources.

The school will review its use of **Kapow Primary** alongside statutory requirements to ensure that the curriculum continues to meet the needs of pupils at Thwaites School.

Findings from monitoring and evaluation will be used to inform curriculum development, staff support and future review of this policy.

9. Monitoring and Review of the Policy

This policy will be reviewed **at least annually**, and sooner where there are significant changes to relevant legislation, statutory guidance, the school's curriculum or other circumstances which require it to be updated.

The policy will be reviewed by the Curriculum Link Governor, with input from the Headteacher, and approved on behalf of the Governing Body under its delegated arrangements.

Parents and carers will be consulted when the policy is developed or reviewed, in accordance with statutory requirements. The school will also take appropriate account of the views of staff and pupils when reviewing its RSHE provision.

The policy will be **published on the school website**, made available to parents and carers and provided free of charge to anyone who requests a copy.

The school's RSHE curriculum and use of **Kapow Primary** will also be kept under review to ensure that teaching remains consistent with current statutory guidance and appropriate to the age, stage and needs of pupils at Thwaites School.

9.1 Links with Other Policies

This policy should be read alongside other relevant school policies and procedures, including:

- **Child Protection Policy and Procedures;**
- **SEN and Disability Policy and SEND Information Report;**
- **Equality Policy and objectives;**
- **Behaviour and Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures;**
- **Online Safety Policy;** and
- other relevant curriculum and safeguarding procedures.