Ickleford Primary School

Shared Values · Shared Aspirations · Shared Achievements

A Church of England School

RSHE Policy

Date of Approval: Summer 2026

Date of next review: Summer 2027

Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10 NIV(UK)

Ickleford Primary School Vision Statement

We aspire to build a happy and inclusive community underpinned by core Christian values and those shared by other faiths. This will enable us to nurture resilient pupils with a passion for life-long learning, ensuring everyone's potential is fulfilled.

Ickleford Primary School Core Values

- Ensuring a happy teaching environment
- Building an inclusive community
- Instilling values
- Developing resilient pupils
- Creating independent thinkers with a passion for learning
- Nurturing potential

Objective of the RSHE Policy:

- to ensure parents and carers, staff and governors understand the definition of Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)
- to ensure that parents (this should be taken as meaning 'parents and carers' in all cases), teachers and governors understand current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education;
- to set out, what is covered in our curriculum, intended outcomes for pupils and how it is delivered; and
- to ensure that all pupils, parents, staff and governors have an agreed understanding as to Ickleford Primary School's approach to the teaching and learning of high quality, age-appropriate RSHE integrated in our school's Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education
- to explain how content will be made accessible to all pupils, including those with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND)
- to ensure parents understand what constitutes Sex Education, within our PSHE/RSHE curriculum, and how this effects the limits on their right to remove their child from these lessons

Rationale

This policy is produced by the RSHE and PSHE Subject Lead following consultation with parents, Governors and pupils. It is ratified by Governors and will be reviewed and updated annually.

Ickleford Primary School is committed to RSHE, which:

1. is an identifiable part of our personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across both Key Stages and EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage: Reception class).
2. is taught by staff regularly trained in RSHE and PSHE (with expert visitors invited in to enhance and supplement the programme where appropriate).
3. works in partnership with parents, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home.
4. delivers lessons where pupils feel safe and encourages participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.
5. is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
6. Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online
7. gives a positive view of human sexuality, with honest and medically accurate information, so that pupils can learn about their bodies and sexual and reproductive health in ways that are appropriate to their age and maturity.
8. gives pupils opportunities to reflect on values and influences (such as from peers, media, faith and culture) that may shape their attitudes to relationships and sex, and nurtures respect for different views.
9. includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse and other health and advice services, including reliable information online.
10. fosters gender equality and LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) equality and challenges all forms of discrimination in RSHE lessons and in every-day school life. LGBT+ definitions and terminology can be found in appendix 1.
11. Meets the needs of all pupils with their diverse experiences - including those with special educational needs and disabilities
12. seeks pupils' views about RSHE so that teaching can be made relevant to their real lives and assessed and adapted as their needs change.

These 12 points, outlined by the Sex Education Forum explain what is needed for good quality RSHE. This is based on research evidence and is supported by a wide range of organisations, including: NSPCC, Barnardo's and the National Children's Bureau. The purpose of RSHE is to help children and young people to be safe, healthy and happy as they grow up and in their future lives. RSHE must always be appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development and is an essential part of safeguarding.

In addition, Ickleford Primary School follows the latest guidance issued by the Department for Education in July 2025, which states that schools 'should be sensitive to pupils'

circumstance, recognising that families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children, and can include single parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, young carers, kinships carers, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers. Teaching should illustrate a wide range of family structures in a positive way, and care should be taken to ensure that children are not stigmatised based on their home circumstances.'

Legislation, Statutory Regulations, Guidance and Policy

Current regulations and guidance from the Department for Education states that, all primary schools, like Ickleford Primary School, are required to teach Relationship Education from September 2020. This is set out in the guidance document 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/908013/Relationships_Education__Relationships_and_Sex_Education__RSE__and_Health_Education.pdf

This guidance was finalised and passed into law by parliament in 2019.

In summary, it aims to create a curriculum that:

- fosters pupils' respect for themselves and others;
- promotes equality and values difference; and
- educates pupils about positive relationships; and helps pupils understand how their actions can impact on their health, wellbeing and safety.

In July 2025, updated statutory guidance was published for schools. This guidance document sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply when teaching relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education. This guidance must be implemented by all schools by September 2026:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6970e7e67e827090d02d42e0/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education__RSE__and_health_education__for_intro_1_September_2026_.pdf

Although sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, in the most current government guidance, the DfE recommends that all primary schools 'teach sex education in years 5 and/or 6, in line with content about conception and birth, which forms part of the national curriculum for science.'

The governors at Ickleford Primary School have agreed, that in order to achieve our school's core values and to commit to the rationale previously stated, we should deliver a scheme of work that goes beyond the statutory requirement of Relationship Education and Health Education and deliver a curriculum that includes age-appropriate Sex Education, in Years 5 and 6.

Ickleford Primary School Scheme of Work

Ickleford Primary School believes that RSHE is best approached in an integrated way, giving emotional context to an abstract concept. With this philosophy in mind, we have adopted and adapted a published PSHE scheme of work from Kapow, which integrates RSHE. https://www.kapowprimary.com/subjects/rse-pshe/

Our scheme of work fulfils the most recent statutory requirements for Relationships and Health Education set out by the Department for Education. It also fulfils the National Curriculum requirement to teach PSHE ('All schools should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education') and goes beyond the statutory requirements by referring to the PSHE Association Programme of Study (recommended by the Department for Education.)

Our PSHE scheme of work sets out learning opportunities at Reception, KS1 and KS2, in six core areas:

- **My healthy self** – Learning how to look after their mental and physical health and make choices that support their wellbeing.
- **Connecting with others** – Learning how to build positive relationships, communicate with respect and understand the importance of kindness and boundaries.
- **The online world** – Learning how to use the internet safely, recognise risks and behave responsibly when communicating or accessing information online.
- **Staying safe** – Learning how to recognise risks, respond safely in different situations and seek help when something feels wrong or unsafe.
- **Health protection –** Learning how to prevent illness, manage basic first aid and understand how hygiene, vaccines and healthy habits help keep people well.
- **Growing up –** Learning about the changes that happen as they grow, including puberty and developing bodies and how to manage these changes with confidence.

For further details of our scheme of work, refer to the PSHE/RSHE Overview in Appendix 2.

Our ethos is that PSHE education (incorporating RSHE) should address both pupils' current experiences and preparation for the future. Therefore, our scheme of work provides a spiral curriculum with the following key principles in mind:

- Cyclical: Pupils revisit the seven key areas throughout EYFS, KS1 and KS2.
- Increasing depth: Each time a key area is revisited, it is covered with greater depth and increasing maturity.
- Prior knowledge: Upon returning to each key area, prior knowledge is utilised so pupils can build on previous foundations, rather than starting again.

Teachers use our scheme of work to plan lessons flexibly according to our pupils' development, readiness, needs and take into account prior learning, experience and understanding.

PSHE and RSE in Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS): Reception class

Personal, Social and Emotional Development is one of the three Prime Areas in the statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage. The prime areas, Communication and Language, Physical Development and Personal, and Social and Emotional Development (PSED), lay the foundations for children to achieve in all areas of learning and life.

The Early Learning Goals (ELG) are a list of the knowledge, skills and understanding that all young children should have gained by the end of the Reception in the Personal, Social and Emotional Development prime area and are referenced in our RSHE & PSHE lesson plans, along with the relevant non-statutory Development Matters guidance.

We have organised the Reception units of learning content, to cover the PSED requirements, under the most relevant ELGs:

- Self regulation
- Managing Self
- Building relationships

For further details of our scheme of work, refer to the PSHE Overview in the Appendix.

Making Curriculum Content Accessible to All Pupils

At Ickleford Primary School, we are committed to ensuring that our RSHE and PSHE curriculum content is accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND. The July 2025 guidance from the Department for Education recognises that schools should be aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than other peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, particularly those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

Teachers have access to resources for children with special educational needs and disability, upon request. If further support is needed, our SEND Co will liaise with parents and class teachers to aid in the delivery of a curriculum that is individualised for that pupil's specific requirements.

Managing Questions from Pupils

Our teaching staff are carefully trained to facilitate discussions and answer questions from pupils during RSHE lessons. They set clear ground rules to provide an agreed structure and safe space to answer sensitive or difficult questions. Teachers will not answer personal questions but will endeavour to answer other, age appropriate questions as honestly as possible. Pupils will also have access to a 'Dear Teacher' box, in order to ask questions in a written format.

We recognise that pupils may ask questions about topics in sex education that are not covered by our Key Stage 2 curriculum, or that relate to lessons from which a child has been withdrawn. RSHE statutory guidance notes that, 'given ease of access to the internet, children whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information.'

Where a question is not age appropriate and beyond the Key Stage 2 objectives, or a child asks a question about content from which they have been withdrawn by parents, it will not be explored. However, children will be encouraged to speak to their parent or carer for further information.

The Limits on the Right to Excuse Pupils from RSHE Lessons

The law states parents cannot excuse their child from the relationships strand of our RSHE curriculum. It is important that all children receive this content. Ickleford Primary School will deliver this in an age appropriate way as well as reflecting our school values of kindness, consideration and respect etc. covering topics such as:

- How can I help myself and others to feel happy and safe? (Year 1)
- How can I build safe, kind and caring relationships with others (Year 2)
- What helps us to feel safe and included? (Year 3)
- How can we respect each other? (Year 4)
- Why are healthy relationships important? (Year 5)
- What does it mean to stand up for myself and others? (Year 6)

In addition, parents cannot excuse their child from the health and wellbeing strand of RSHE. We aim to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.

By the end of primary school, pupils will have been taught health and wellbeing content on:

- General wellbeing
- Wellbeing online
- Physical health and fitness
- Healthy eating
- Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping
- Health protection and prevention
- Personal safety
- Basic first aid
- Developing bodies

Sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, beyond what is laid out in the National Curriculum for Science

- Year 1: Identify, name, draw and label the basic parts of the human body, this includes using scientific names for genitalia
- Year 2: Notice animals, including humans, have offspring which grow into adults
- Year 5: Describe the life process of reproduction in some plants and animals; describe the changes as humans develop to old age. (They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.)

Parents cannot excuse their pupils from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Parents should 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, geography, history or RE, and it is not possible to excuse pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions.

The RSHE statutory guidance states that:

'Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, it is good practice for the head teacher to discuss the request with parents, and the child if appropriate, to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and the detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impact on the child and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate.'

Our scheme of work includes **a unit of 6 Sex Education lessons delivered in Year 5 and repeated in Year 6.** These 6 lessons cover:

1) Which words can we use to describe our private body parts?
2) How are babies made?
3) What happens in pregnancy and how are babies born?
4) How are families formed?
5) How can life change after having a baby?
6) What is consent?

Parents have the opportunity to excuse their children from all/part of these 6 lessons within the unit of 'How do people become parents and carers' they go beyond the statutory guidance.

We will always consult with Year 5 and 6 parents, at an **information meeting** in the summer term**,** about the content and material used in these lessons (incl video material) prior to teaching them, to provide parents time to consider the content and to remove their child if they so wish.

Parents will also be given access an online parent information area from Kapow, where they can:

- Find answers to common questions about RSHE & PSHE.
- Understand what is included in the Kapow Primary RSHE & PSHE scheme.
- Learn about parents' rights in relation to RSHE & PSHE, particularly around sex education.
- Understand the benefits of RSHE & PSHE and how they can support their child's learning.

School Procedure to excuse pupils from the sex education elements of the RSHE Curriculum

Parents wishing to exercise their right to excuse their child from the sex education elements of the RSHE curriculum should express their concerns in an email to the headteacher. Parents will be invited in, to meet with the headteacher or deputy headteacher, who will explore any concerns and discuss any impact that excusal from RSHE activities may have on the child. Once a child has been excused, they cannot take part in the specific sex education lessons until the request for withdrawal has been removed.

At Ickleford Primary School, we acknowledge parents should be given every opportunity to understand the purpose and content of our RSHE curriculum. It is our aim that good communication and opportunities for parents to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSHE can help increase confidence in that curriculum.

If parents feel their concerns, questions or requests have not been fully addressed by school, regarding their right to excuse their child from the elements of sex education lessons, they should refer to the School's Complaint Procedure, which can be found on the school website.

Appendix 1

LGBTQ+ Key Terms and Definitions

LGBTQ+

This term stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/ questioning. The '+' represents other members of the community who do not feel that they fit into any of these categories.

Lesbian

A woman who is attracted to other women.

Gay

A man who is attracted to other men or a woman who is attracted to other women.

Bisexual

A person who is attracted to both men and women.

Transgender

Describes someone whose gender identity (how they feel) is different from the sex they were registered with at birth.

Queer

Describes someone who doesn't feel that they identify with any of the other labels.

Questioning

When a person explores their sexual orientation or gender identity.

LGBT+ Key Terms and Definitions

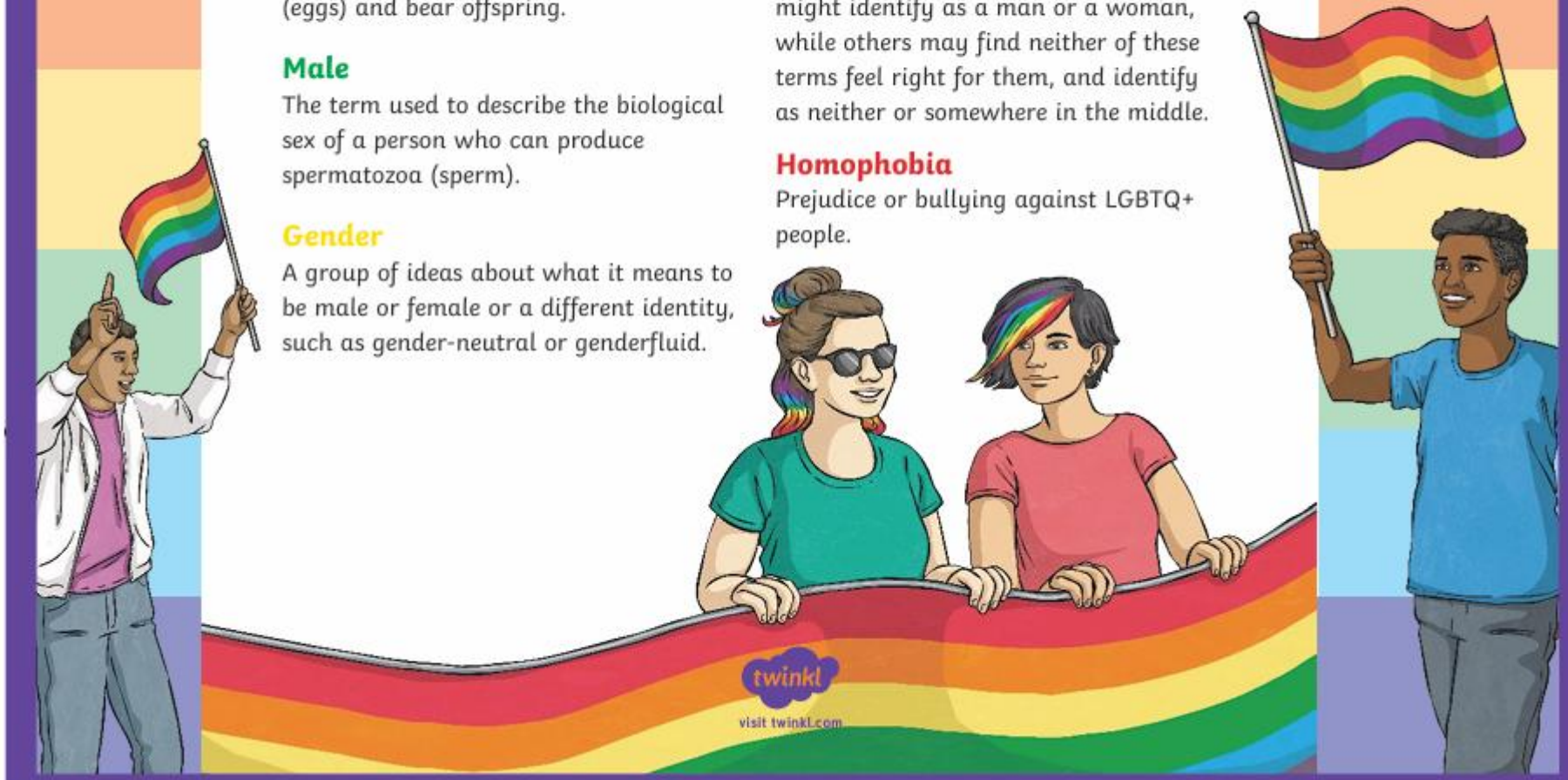
Female
The term used to describe the biological sex of a person who can produce ova (eggs) and bear offspring.

Male
The term used to describe the biological sex of a person who can produce spermatozoa (sperm).

Gender
A group of ideas about what it means to be male or female or a different identity, such as gender-neutral or genderfluid.

Gender Identity
Our sense of who we are and how we see and describe ourselves. Someone might identify as a man or a woman, while others may find neither of these terms feel right for them, and identify as neither or somewhere in the middle.

Homophobia
Prejudice or bullying against LGBTQ+ people.



Appendix 2 - PSHE and RSHE Long Term Plan

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
EYFS	Building relationships: Special relationships	Self-regulation: My feelings	Managing self: Taking on challenges	Self-regulation: Listening and following instructions	Building relationships: My family and friends	Managing self: My wellbeing
Year 1	My healthy self: How can we look after our feelings?	Connecting with others: How can I help myself and others feel happy and safe?	The online world: How do we spend time online?		Health protection: How can I protect myself and others in daily life?	Staying safe: How can I stay safe?
Year 2	My healthy self: How can we look after our bodies?	Connecting with others: How can I build safe, kind and caring relationships with others?	The online world: How are things shared online?		Growing Up: How can we look after and respect our bodies as we grow?	Staying safe: How can I make safe choices in different places?
Year 3	My healthy self: How can I take care of my mind and body?	Connecting with others: What helps us feel safe and included?	The online world: How should we treat each other online?		Health protection: How can we prevent illness and injury and respond if they happen?	
Year 4	My healthy self: How can I make healthy choices?	Connecting with others: How can we respect each other?	The online world: How can I evaluate what I see online?		Growing Up: How will my body and emotions change as I grow up?	Staying safe: What signs help me recognise what is safe or unsafe?
Year 5	My healthy self: How can I support my mind and body as I grow?	Connecting with others: Why are healthy relationships important?	The online world: How am I influenced by what I see online?		Growing Up: How can I manage the changes to my body and emotions as I grow up?	**Sex Education: How do people become parents and carers?**
Year 6	My healthy self: How do my choices today shape my future wellbeing?	Connecting with others: What does it mean to stand up for myself and others?	The online world: How do I feel about being online?		Staying safe: How can I stay safe as I grow up?	**Sex Education: How do people become parents and carers?**