



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:	ALL Schools require this policy with no changes allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools, except where a school contact is required as identified in the content of the policy. LGBs will note adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	ODBST Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy ODBST Curriculum Policy
Committee responsible:	SEC
Approved by:	SEC
Date Approved:	
Review Date:	

1. Aims

The aims of the ODBST relationships and sex education (RSE) are to:

- provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place;
- prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene;
- help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy;
- create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships;
- teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies;
- for pupils to know what safe and healthy relationships look like in order for pupils to keep themselves safe and healthy.

This policy has been reviewed to ensure compliance with statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance effective from September 2026.

2. Statutory Requirements

All academies must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

ODBST schools are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is based on the National Curriculum, including requirements to teach science. This should include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSHE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to the Department for Education's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' statutory guidance (July 2025), effective from September 2026, issued under section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

ODBST schools teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy Development

The ODBST are consulting with parents, staff and pupils as part of our process for making changes to this RSHE policy. The consultation period will run from 06.07.26 until 06.09.26

The ODBST has determined the core policy and each school will ensure that:

- the Headteacher and RSE lead has considered all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance and has consulted with the ODBST Director of Education
- staff consultation – all school staff are given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties are invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE learning in school and use this to inform the relevant scheme adopted
- ratification – once amendments are made, an appropriate scheme will be chosen and shared with governors. Any suggested amendments to the core policy will be sent to the ODBST via the school Headteacher and considered by the Director of Education and the ODBST Trustees.

4. Definition

Trustees of the ODBST expect all of our Key Stage 2 settings to include sex education in addition to what is covered in the core science curriculum.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

The RSE curriculum for The Downley School (TDS) is set out in Appendix 1. This may be adapted and parents/carers will always be informed when significant changes are made to the content that is being covered. Parents and carers are entitled to view all Relationships and Sex Education teaching materials on request and will be given opportunities to ask questions about them. Parents should request these from the class teacher who will ensure that the request is addressed.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions

outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

As part of RSHE, pupils are taught about online risks including artificial intelligence (AI) generated content, deepfakes, sextortion, fake online identities and other forms of online exploitation, in an age-appropriate way.

Primary school sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

Secondary school sex education will focus on:

- healthy, respectful and safe intimate relationships, including consent and communication;
- sexual health and reproductive choices, including contraception, pregnancy options and STI/HIV prevention;
- understanding the law and recognising abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- online risks, including pornography, coercive control, harmful online cultures and AI-generated content;
- accessing appropriate help, advice and support.

In 16–19 provision, RSHE builds on earlier learning and supports pupils to make informed, safe and responsible decisions as they prepare for adult life.

ODBST schools also deliver the required health education, covering physical health, mental wellbeing, puberty, drugs and alcohol, personal safety and first aid, taught progressively through PSHE. At secondary, sensitive topics such as eating disorders, self-harm and suicide prevention are addressed using appropriately trained staff and evidence-based materials.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

6. Delivery of RSHE

At TDS we use Jigsaw PSHE as our curriculum framework because it provides a comprehensive, carefully sequenced scheme of work that brings consistency and progression to children's learning across their primary years. Built on current research and best practice in child development, safeguarding and health education, it is kept continuously up to date with evolving statutory guidance and enables us to deliver high-quality PSHE education that meets our children's needs. The programme is distinctive in its approach including:

- Emotional literacy at the core - Every Jigsaw lesson systematically develops children's emotional vocabulary and understanding. Children learn to recognise, name and talk about a wide range of feelings in themselves and others. This emotional literacy supports children's ability to share and discuss things that are important in their lives, to seek help when needed, and to build positive relationships.
- Mindful practice - Every Jigsaw lesson begins with 'Calm Me Time', a mindfulness activity designed to support self-regulation and create a safe, focused space for learning. This consistent practice forms part of our approach to children's emotional wellbeing and helps children to be ready for open, thoughtful discussion.
- Connection and community - The 'Connect Us' activity in every lesson strengthens relationships within the class and develops children's social skills, building a sense of belonging and mutual respect that underpins all learning.
- Developing skills for respectful dialogue - PSHE lessons provide regular opportunities for children to develop and practise essential communication skills including listening to others, expressing their own views clearly and respectfully, considering different perspectives, and

engaging in constructive discussion. These oracy skills are fundamental to building positive relationships and respectful communities, enabling children to navigate differences with kindness and to participate confidently in democratic discussion.

- Age-appropriate spiral curriculum - Topics are revisited across year groups with increasing depth and complexity, enabling children to build on prior learning in line with their developing maturity and understanding, with teachers able to adapt according to their pupils' needs.
- Interactive, participative teaching - Lessons are designed to be engaging and active, using discussion, role-play, problem-solving and creative activities to develop skills alongside knowledge. Children don't just gain information - they explore topics in age-appropriate ways and develop practical skills that support them in their everyday lives.

The Six Jigsaw Puzzles

Our PSHE curriculum is organised into six themed units ('Puzzles'), each taught for approximately half a term:

Term	Puzzle	Key Content
Autumn 1	Being Me in My World	Understanding personal identity, my place in the class and school community, rights and responsibilities, democracy, making a positive contribution.
Autumn 2	Celebrating Difference	Recognising and respecting diversity, challenging stereotypes, understanding difference and similarity, addressing bullying, building empathy and compassion.
Spring 1	Dreams and Goals	Setting and working towards goals, understanding aspirations and future possibilities, developing perseverance and resilience, recognising achievements, working collaboratively.
Spring 2	Healthy Me	The relationship between physical and emotional health; nutrition, sleep, exercise and hygiene; emotional wellbeing; drug education (including medicines); keeping safe; understanding habits and making healthy lifestyle choices.
Summer 1	Relationships	Understanding different relationships and their characteristics, our families, managing friendship challenges, conflict resolution and communication skills, recognising when relationships are unhealthy, understanding loss and bereavement.
Summer 2	Changing Me	Understanding life cycles and human growth, coping positively with change, body image and self-esteem, puberty education, changing relationships, and for upper Key Stage 2, human reproduction.

Adapting Jigsaw for Our School Community

Whilst we follow the Jigsaw programme, we recognise that our children, families and context have specific needs and characteristics. Our PSHE lead and class teachers carefully consider each lesson's content and approach to ensure it is appropriate and relevant for our pupils, taking into account:

- The specific needs, experiences and developmental stages of pupils in each class
- Pupil voice - gathered through feedback within lessons, informal discussions with children, school council discussions, pupil surveys and class discussions
- Local context and community considerations

- Feedback from parents, pupils and staff
- Our school's distinctive values and ethos

Where we make adaptations to the programme, these decisions are made thoughtfully, in consultation with senior leadership, and with reference to statutory requirements. Parents and carers are informed about significant adaptations, particularly where these relate to sensitive content.

We teach age-appropriate sex education in Years 5 and 6 as part of our PSHE curriculum, going beyond the statutory content about puberty to include factual information about human reproduction. We believe this information is important for children before they leave primary school, particularly as children naturally become more aware and curious about how life begins, and may seek information from less reliable sources if we do not provide age-appropriate, factual teaching.

We define sex education as learning about human reproduction. It is defined as those lessons covering sexual intercourse, conception, the stages of pregnancy and birth. It includes the emotional impact of having a baby as well as the physical facts. Sex education is not learning about different types of sexual activity.

This is distinct from the statutory Health Education content about puberty and menstruation, and from Science curriculum content about life cycles and reproduction in mammals, from which children cannot be withdrawn.

The following Jigsaw lessons in the Changing Me Puzzle contain non-statutory sex education content:

- Year 5: Conception
- Year 6: Babies: Conception to Birth

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Teaching about sex, gender and protected characteristics is factual, lawful and balanced. Pupils are taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment, including distinct legal rights. Beyond these facts, schools will not teach contested views as settled fact — for example, schools will not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity.

RSHE is taught in a way that is appropriate having regard to the age, development and religious background of pupils, and which respects faith perspectives while meeting statutory requirements.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may

have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

RSHE also supports pupils to recognise and understand sexual harassment and sexual violence, including peer-on-peer abuse, and to know that such behaviour is unacceptable, never the victim's fault, and should be reported. Teaching about consent emphasises kindness, care, respect and awareness of power imbalance, and not consent alone.

7. Inclusivity

ODBST schools will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them;
- is sensitive to all pupils' experiences;
- during lessons, makes pupils feel safe and supported and able to ask the questions that they want to ask;
- challenges harmful attitudes and behaviours, including sexism and misogyny.

ODBST schools will ensure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:

- A whole-class setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats

We know that pupils with SEND are more likely to be subject to abuse and to relationship difficulties and that understanding some of the key concepts around RSHE can sometimes be more challenging for pupils with SEND. ODBST schools will ensure that the materials used to support the RSE learning for pupils with SEND are suitably adapted and meet individual need.

8. Use of resources

ODBST schools will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance;
- would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings;
- are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils;
- are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics;
- fit into our curriculum plan;
- are from credible sources;
- are compatible with effective teaching approaches;
- are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress.

Parents and carers are entitled to view all Relationships and Sex Education teaching materials on request and will be given opportunities to ask questions about them.

8.1 Use of external organisations and resources

Many ODBST schools use external agencies and commercially produced resources to support RSHE delivery. The school remains responsible for all content delivered to pupils, including ensuring it does not undermine fundamental British values.

Before working with any external agency, schools will check the credentials of the provider, view all materials and lesson plans in advance, and ensure content is age-appropriate, balanced, and consistent with this policy. All materials used by external providers will be available to parents on request.

ODBST will not work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions, nor use materials produced by such agencies even if the material itself is not extreme.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 The ODBST Trustees and Local Governing Body

The ODBST Trustees have approved the RSHE policy and the Local Governing Body and ODBST Director of Education will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

9.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSHE (see section 9).

9.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- delivering RSE in a sensitive way;
- modelling positive attitudes to RSE;
- monitoring progress;
- responding to the needs of individual pupils;
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSHE.

All teaching staff are expected to deliver RSHE lessons and do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

9.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

10 Parent/carer right to withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents before granting it. In secondary schools, the Headteacher may decline a request in exceptional circumstances, such as safeguarding concerns.

Alternative school work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

From three terms before their 16th birthday, a pupil may choose to receive sex education even if they have previously been withdrawn at the request of their parent or carer. Secondary schools will ensure pupils are made aware of this right.

11. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Leanne Dandridge, Headteacher through:

Pupil voice

Learning walks

Staff surveys and staff meetings

Work scrutinies

Online learning journals

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Appendix 1

PSHE Knowledge Content Snapshot Overview

Age group	Being Me In My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Ages 3-5	Self-identity Understanding feelings Being in a classroom Being gentle Rights and responsibilities	Identifying talents Being special Families Where we live Making friends Standing up for yourself	Challenges Perseverance Achieving and setting goals Overcoming obstacles Seeking help Jobs	Exercising bodies Physical activity Healthy food Sleep Keeping clean Safety	Family life Friendships Breaking friendships Falling out Dealing with bullying Being a good friend	Bodies Respecting my body Growing up Growth and change Fun and fears Celebrations
Ages 5-6	Feeling special and safe Being part of a class Rights and responsibilities Rewards and feeling proud Consequences Owning the learning charter	Similarities and differences Understanding bullying and knowing how to deal with it Making new friends Celebrating the differences in everyone	Setting goals Identifying successes and achievements Learning styles Working well and celebrating achievement with a partner Tackling new challenges Identifying and overcoming obstacles Feelings of success	Keeping myself healthy Healthier lifestyle choices Keeping clean Being safe Medicine safety/ safety with household items Road safety Linking health and happiness	Belonging to a family Making friends/being a good friend Physical contact preferences People who help us Qualities as a friend and person Self-acknowledgement Being a good friend to myself Celebrating special relationships	Life cycles – animal and human Changes in me Changes since being a baby Differences between female and male bodies (correct terminology) Linking growing and learning Coping with change Transition

Age group	Being Me In My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Ages 6-7	Hopes and fears for the year Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Safe and fair learning environment Valuing contributions Choices Recognising feelings	Assumptions and stereotypes about gender Understanding bullying Standing up for self and others Making new friends Celebrating difference and remaining friends	Achieving realistic goals Staying healthy to achieve goals Perseverance and strengths Learning with others Group co-operation Contributing to and sharing success	Motivation Healthier choices Healthy eating and nutrition Safety in the home Safety out and about Medicines	Different types of family Physical contact boundaries Friendship and conflict Secrets Trust and appreciation Expressing appreciation for special relationships	Life cycles in nature Growing from young to old Increasing independence Differences in female and male bodies (correct terminology) Assertiveness Preparing for transition
Ages 7-8	Setting personal goals Self-identity and worth Positivity in challenges Rules, rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences Responsible choices Seeing things from others' perspectives	Families and their differences Family conflict and how to manage it (child-centred) Witnessing bullying and how to solve it Recognising how words can be hurtful Giving and receiving compliments	Difficult challenges and achieving success Dreams and ambitions Motivation and enthusiasm Recognising and trying to overcome obstacles Evaluating learning Processes Contributing to the community Managing feelings Simple budgeting	Exercise Food labelling and healthy swaps Attitudes towards drugs Keeping safe online and off line Respect for myself and others Healthy and safe choices outdoors Water safety Asking for help	Family roles and responsibilities Friendship and negotiation Keeping safe online and who to go to for help Media influence Being a global citizen How my choices affect others Awareness of other children's different lives Expressing appreciation for family and friends	How babies grow Outside body changes Inside body changes Personal hygiene Family stereotypes Challenging my ideas Preparing for transition

Age group	Being Me In My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Ages 8-9	Being part of a class team Being a school citizen Rights, responsibilities and democracy (school council) Rewards and consequences Group decision-making Having a voice What motivates behaviour	Challenging assumptions Judging by appearance Accepting self and others Understanding influences Understanding bullying Problem-solving Identifying how special and unique everyone is First impressions	Hopes and dreams Overcoming disappointment Creating new realistic dreams Achieving goals Working in a group Celebrating contributions Resilience Positive attitudes	Healthier friendships Peer influences Railway safety Staying safe with friends Smoking Alcohol and vaping Assertiveness Peer pressure Celebrating inner strength	Jealousy Love and loss Memories of loved ones Getting and Falling Out Girlfriends and Boyfriends Showing appreciation to people and animals	Being unique Girls and puberty Being part of a family Confidence in change Accepting change Preparing for transition Environmental change
Ages 9-10	Planning the year ahead Being a citizen Rights and responsibilities Rewards and consequences How behaviour affects groups Democracy, having a voice, participating	Cultural differences and how they can cause conflict Racism Rumours and name-calling Types of bullying Materials wealth and happiness Enjoying and respecting other cultures	Future dreams Spending, saving and value of money Jobs and careers Dream job and how to get there Goals in different cultures Supporting others (charity) Motivation	Smoking including vaping Alcohol and vaping Alcohol and anti-social behaviour Emergency aid Body image Relationships with food Healthy choices Motivation and behaviour	Self-recognition/ self-worth Building self-esteem Safer online communities Rights and responsibilities online Online gaming and risks Reducing screen time Dangers of online grooming Internet safety rules	Self- and body image Influence of online and media on body image Puberty for girls Puberty for boys <i>Conception (including IVF)</i> Growing responsibility Coping with change Preparing for transition

Age group	Being Me In My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Ages 10-11	Identifying goals for the year Global citizenship Children's universal rights Feeling welcome and valued Choices, consequences and rewards Group dynamics Democracy, having a voice Anti-social behaviour Role-modelling	Perceptions of normality Understanding disability Power struggles Understanding bullying Inclusion/exclusion Differences as conflict, difference as celebration Empathy	Personal learning goals, in and out of school Success criteria Emotions in success Making a difference in the world Motivation Recognising achievements Compliments	Taking personal responsibility How substances affect the body Exploitation including 'county lines' and gang culture Emotional and mental health Managing stress	Mental health Identifying mental health worries and sources of support Love and loss Managing feelings Power and control Assertiveness Technology safety Take responsibility with technology use	Self-image Body-image Puberty and feelings <i>Conception to birth</i> Reflections about change Physical attraction Respect and consent Boyfriends/girlfriends Sexting Transition