

INGLEBY MILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Relationships and Health Education Policy

July 2026

Relationships and Health Education at Ingleby Mill Primary School

Parties involved in the Relationships and Health Education Policy development and consultation:

- IMPS staff
- Parents and carers
- Pupils
- Governing Body

The policy reflects the DfE July 2025 statutory **Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education** guidance (to be implemented from September 2026).

This policy will be updated every three years and/or in line with government reviews.

This policy will be made available on the school website. Paper copies will also be available from the school office.

Why do we refer to Relationships and Health Education as Life Lessons?

We want our children to understand the importance of the Relationships and Health Education (RHE) curriculum and the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) curriculum on their lives now, and in the future. We feel by calling these subjects Life Lessons, it will help the children to make these links and easily identify with these subjects.

Why do we teach Relationships and Health Education?

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils can put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Everyone faces difficult situations in their lives. These subjects can support young people to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know when others may need help, and to know where to access support. High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society.

Aims and outcomes of Relationships and Health Education in the curriculum

The overall aim of RHE is to foster a positive notion of lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development, including how to look after mental and physical health. It aims to support the development of self-respect and empathy for others and promotes the development of skills and understanding necessary to manage conflict peaceably and learn how to recognise exploitation and abuse.

Morals, Values, Equalities and Safeguarding

The RHE programme at Ingleby Mill Primary reflects our ethos, and demonstrates and promotes the following:

- Learning the value of respect, care and love
- Valuing family life within stable, loving and committed relationships
- Acceptance of same sex unions as also offering stable, loving and committed relationships to nurture children
- Respect for self and others
- Respect for rights and responsibilities within relationships
- Appreciating that different, successful family structures exist
- Understanding and acceptance of diversity regarding religion, gender, culture and sexual orientation
- Understanding of striving to reduce intolerance and discrimination based on protected characteristics
- Promoting gender equality in relationships
- Challenging gender stereotypes and inequality
- Developing spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness in line with the 2010 Equality Act and the school's safeguarding and child protection protocols

Content of the RHE programme

To deliver the content of our RHE programme, we use lessons and resources from Pol-Ed ([A positive force in education | Pol-Ed - A positive force in education](#)), along with the 'Changing and Growing Up' lessons and resources shared by the Medway Health Directorate.

Our RHE lessons form part of our wider 'Life Lessons' curriculum which covers RHE and PSHE topics. Other curriculum areas (e.g. computing, science, PE, RE) will also deliver content which supports learning within RHE.

All the statutory RHE content is covered within our curriculum.

Life Lessons are taught weekly throughout the year. Lessons are predominantly delivered by school staff, however, if necessary and appropriate, external providers (e.g. the school nursing service) may deliver additional learning which complements our Life Lessons curriculum.

Life Lessons are typically delivered by school staff in mixed gender groups. This is to ensure that boys and girls have opportunities to practise respectful communication and understand experiences which are different from their own. However, if school identifies a specific need, we may consider that separating classes by sex is the best way to create a safe space for discussion of a particular topic. If this is the case, this will be done in a way that avoids stigmatising boys or making girls feel like they will inevitably be victims of abusive behaviour, or that it is their responsibility to protect themselves.

Ingleby Mill Primary School does not currently teach sex education. This would only change following consultation with parents. As our RHE curriculum does not cover sex education, parents/carers do not have the right to request to withdraw their child from Life Lessons. If, following consultation, a decision was made to include sex education to our Life Lessons curriculum, parents/carers would have the right to request that their child is withdrawn from those specific sex education lessons (but not the rest of the RHE curriculum).

Puberty and changes to the adolescent body are part of the health curriculum, which is statutory, and therefore parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw from this element of the curriculum. The Changing and Growing Up lessons and resources we use are available for parents/carers to read and we welcome any questions or discussions around the delivery of this element of the curriculum.

At Ingleby Mill Primary School, we begin teaching the children about puberty and the changing adolescent body in Year 4. This is in line with the DfE guidance which states 'puberty including menstruation should be covered in Health Education and should, as far as possible, be addressed before onset'. For this reason, our teaching of puberty begins with pupils in Year 4, so they are prepared for the changes they and their peers will experience.

Our relationships education focuses on how to form and sustain positive relationships but also helps children identify risks and harms. Relationships education may therefore include topics related to preventing sexual abuse (e.g. through use of the NSPCC 'Talk Pants' lessons) while avoiding describing the detail of any sexual activity or abuse involved.

The lessons and resources used are flexible in order to meet the needs of all pupils. The school subscribes to support from the PSHE Association and the PSHE Leader and SENDCO will support staff to ensure the PSHE Association guidance on enhancing PSHE provision for pupils with SEND is shared with teaching staff.

During Life Lessons, current medical terminology will be used for naming of body parts and functions.

Managing difficult questions

In the event that a child asks a question about a topic which goes beyond the RHE curriculum, staff will seek to handle such a question in a sensitive and supportive way, taking account of the child's age and maturity. Staff will be aware that children whose questions go unanswered might turn to inappropriate sources of information, including online, so staff will suggest pupils ask a parent or trusted adult and/or signpost them to appropriate support services.

Key advice for staff to be aware of:

- Find out the context first e.g. 'What makes you ask that question?' 'Where did you hear that word before?' this will help determine if the child has a genuine question or has misconceptions.
- If a question is 'beyond' the curriculum content for your year group do not answer. Explain that in this year group we don't cover that content, but they will learn about this in older year groups.
- If a child asks a question beyond the curriculum, it is worth following this up with the child's parent and explain that you cannot answer the question in class but it may be something they would want to answer at home.
- If you are unsure how to answer, or whether it is appropriate to answer in your year group say e.g. 'I can't answer that right now, but I'll get back to you'. Follow up with DSL /PSHE Lead who will support you in deciding on your answer (which may be briefly factual, or an explanation that we don't cover that yet / in school, see above).
- Question boxes are a useful way of allowing you time to plan your replies.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Life Lesson curriculum will be monitored by the PSHE Leader and the Senior Leadership Team.

Work in lessons may be recorded in a variety of ways (e.g. as work in individual exercise books, as work in shared class floor books, as work for presentations, performances and displays, or through pupil voice discussions with leaders).

Staff delivering the Life Lessons curriculum will make use of formative and summative assessment to monitor children's learning. Staff and pupil voice will monitor the effectiveness and relevance of the curriculum.

Inclusion and Equality

Our RHE policy reflects and is in keeping with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and ensures that the RHE teaching programme is inclusive and appropriate and relevant to all pupils, including those with SEND.

Pupils will learn about the importance of equality and respect and begin to learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics. Pupils will learn about healthy loving relationships and reference will be made to a diversity of successful, loving families, including same-sex parents and other family arrangements.

Where questions arise regarding gender and transgender issues, the school will promote the statutory guidance which states that teaching 'should recognise that people have legal rights by virtue of their biological sex which are different from the rights of those of the opposite sex with the protected characteristic of gender reassignment.'

Staff teaching RHE are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the statutory guidance around this topic in paragraphs 67-72 ([Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#)).

Safeguarding and Child Protection Issues

In the event that RHE discussions prompt a pupil to disclose about related incidents (e.g. Female Genital Mutilation, forced marriage, child exploitation, abuse), staff will follow our child protection and safeguarding procedures and report their concerns immediately.

'Staff should also be aware of mandatory reporting duties, including relating to FGM, and that virginity testing and hymenoplasty became illegal in 2022. The Government is also introducing a new law which will create a legal requirement for anyone in regulated activity relating to children in England, including teachers, to report if they are made aware a child is being sexually abused.' (Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers, July 2025)

If any lessons are being delivered by external agencies, staff must agree in advance of the session how safeguarding concerns would be dealt with by the external visitor.

Parent/carers involvement

Parents/carers can request to view the resources we use for our relationships and health education; in the first instance, parents/carers should make their request to the school office.

A full consultation with parents/carers will take place in September 2026; the information gathered will help to inform this policy.

Pupil and staff involvement

A pupil survey of all children in Key Stage 2 took place in the summer term of 2025; the feedback from this pupil voice influenced our implementation of new curriculum resources (Pol-Ed and Changing and Growing).

Pupils will continue to be involved in the development of our Life Lessons curriculum through our Junior Leadership programme.

Staff voice was sought during the academic year 2024-2025 in order to determine the most suitable resources to use for our Life Lessons. Key members of staff who delivered the Life Lessons curriculum in 2025-2026, continued to review and provide feedback on the chosen resources.

Professional development for staff

Staff will be kept informed of developments to our RHE and wider Life Lessons curriculum through written guidance and training and discussion provided at staff meetings and professional development days.