



The Mead Infant and Nursery School

RHSE Policy

School name: The Mead Infant and Nursery School

Approved by: Headteacher

Status & review cycle: Reviewed Annually

Next review date: Summer 2 2027

The Mead Infant and Nursery RHSE Policy

1. Introduction

It is a statutory requirement that all infant and primary schools deliver Relationships and Health Education, which takes into consideration the pupil's cohort age and physical and emotional development, in accordance with sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Department for Education statutory guidance (July 2025, effective 1 September 2026). Sex education is non-statutory for infant and primary school pupils and not recommended to be taught before years 5/6. Therefore, it is not included within the Mead Infant and Nursery School's curriculum and within this policy we will refer to Relationships and Health Education (RHE) only.

This policy has been updated to reflect the revised DfE statutory guidance effective from 1 September 2026 and replaces the previous version. It should be read together with our PSHE, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, and our Wellbeing Offer, all of which are available on the school website.

2. Aims

Young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and are learning to live their lives both on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks.

As an infant school, the Mead Infant and Nursery School deliver Relationships and Health Education (RHE) through a programme that focuses on relationship building, friendship, staying safe, celebrating individuality, building self-esteem, and understanding physical and emotional wellbeing.

The aims of RHE are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place in a safe, supportive and age-appropriate environment.
- Prepare pupils to stay safe, make healthy and positive choices, and build safe, positive relationships with others.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, empathy and resilience, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness, honesty, integrity and trustworthiness.
- Create a positive culture around issues of health, wellbeing and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- Enable pupils to understand their rights in relation to their own bodies and personal safety and know how to seek help.
- Support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right.

3. Statutory Requirements

In teaching RHE, we must follow the guidance issued by the Secretary of State as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996.
- Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010.
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which requires us to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups when carrying out our activities.

The statutory guidance used in developing this policy is: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education – DfE Statutory Guidance, July 2025 (effective 1 September 2026).

4. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. The DfE statutory guidance requires that all schools proactively engage and consult parents when developing and reviewing their RHSE policy. The process for developing this policy included:

- Review – the PSHE and RHE lead reviewed all relevant national guidance and the school's existing policy.
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations.
- Parent/carer consultation – parents and carers were consulted on the policy in relation to curriculum content and the importance of RHE for wellbeing and safety.
- Pupil consultation – we considered what children need from their relationships and health education at this stage.
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

The school will continue to consult parents annually. This policy is published on the school website.

5. Guiding Principles

In line with the 2026 statutory guidance, our RHE curriculum is developed with the following key values:

- Engagement with pupils – our curriculum is informed by meaningful engagement with pupils to ensure it is relevant and engaging.
- Engagement and transparency with parents – we proactively engage parents on curriculum content, and all materials are available to view on request.
- Positivity – we focus on building positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships and health, and avoid language that might normalise harmful behaviour.
- Relevant and responsive – our curriculum is age and stage appropriate and accessible to all pupils, adapted to the needs of our local community.
- Whole school approach – RHE is delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships, supported by our behaviour and safeguarding policies, and our wellbeing offering.

6. Definition of RSHE

For the purpose of this policy:

Relationships Education

Relationships Education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, including friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults. It covers how to treat others with kindness, consideration and respect. For

infant school pupils, it does not cover sex education, but it can cover sensitive topics such as recognising when something doesn't feel right, in order to keep children safe.

Health and Wellbeing Education

Health and Wellbeing Education gives pupils 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.

Health and Wellbeing Education – Safety and My Body

This includes learning the correct anatomical names for private body parts, understanding that these parts are private, and developing an awareness of personal boundaries.

This content forms part of the statutory Health Education curriculum, which must be taught by the end of primary school.

At The Mead Infant and Nursery School, we introduce this learning from Nursery onwards in an age-appropriate way to support children to have the knowledge they need to stay safe.

Sex Education

Sex education is non-statutory for infant and primary school pupils. Primary schools may choose to teach age-appropriate sex education, typically in Years 5 or 6; however, as an infant school this is not included within our curriculum

7. Curriculum Content

Our RHE curriculum is delivered primarily through weekly PSHE/RHE lessons using the Kapow PSHE/RSE scheme, which is aligned with the DfE statutory guidance.

Kapow uses a spiral curriculum whereby topics are revisited and built upon in subsequent years. By the end of their time at The Mead Infant and Nursery School (end of Year 2), pupils will have been taught content across the following statutory areas:

Relationships Education

- Families and People Who Care for Me – what families look like; how families show love and care; that families can be different; the importance of stable, caring relationships; how to recognise if a relationship feels unsafe and who to tell.
- Caring Friendships – what makes a good friend; characteristics of positive friendships (kindness, trust, respect, loyalty); how to be friendly and make others feel included; understanding that friendships can have difficulties and how to manage these; who to ask for help.
- Respectful Relationships – treating others with kindness and respect; how to show feelings kindly and calmly; how to communicate boundaries (letting others know what is and is not OK); the impact of unkind and bullying behaviour; understanding and challenging stereotypes; self-respect and its link to wellbeing.

- Online safety and awareness - how to respond if something online makes you worried or uncomfortable.
- Being Safe (appropriate safeguarding content) - that each person's body belongs to them; appropriate and inappropriate physical contact; how to recognise unsafe situations and feelings; responding safely to unknown adults; how to ask for help and keep trying until heard; knowing who trusted adults are; the concept of privacy in relation to the body.

Health and Wellbeing Education

- General wellbeing – identifying and naming feelings; understanding how feelings can change; recognising feelings in us and others; coping strategies including calming techniques and zones of regulation; building resilience and perseverance; the importance of physical activity, rest and interests for wellbeing.
- Wellbeing Online – what we do online and offline; responsible and respectful behaviour when using devices; balancing screen time; online safety rules.
- Physical Health and Fitness – the importance of physical activity and how movement affects the body; the importance of sleep.
- Healthy eating - making healthy food and drink choices.
- Health Protection and Prevention – developing independence in personal care and hygiene; dental hygiene; the importance of sleep; how illness spreads and how to protect against it; understanding the role of people who help us stay healthy; recognising the difference between minor and serious illness or injury; how to protect ourselves in different weathers.
- Personal Safety – safety at home and in the community; road safety; water safety; rail safety; how to recognise unsafe situations; what rules are and why they keep us safe.
- Basic First Aid – how to recognise a serious injury or illness; who to call and what to say in an emergency; basic principles of keeping someone safe while help is sought.

Health and Wellbeing Education – My Body

- The use of anatomically correct terminology for body parts (as outlined in Appendix 2) - from Nursery to Year 2.
- Teaching about privacy and personal boundaries - the NSPCC 'PANTS' (underwear) rule.
- How we grow and change as we get older, for example, getting taller, losing teeth, becoming more independent.

Sex Education

Sex Education is not compulsory in infant or primary schools. The DfE guidance recommends that primary schools teach Sex Education in Years 5 and/or 6 which is therefore not applicable to the Mead Infant and Nursery School.

8. Delivery of RHE

RHE is taught within the PSHE curriculum using the Kapow PSHE/RSE scheme from Reception to year 2, which is fully aligned with the 2026 DfE statutory guidance. The nursery curriculum is currently under review but will be aligned to this guidance and the EYFS statutory framework.

The school will ensure that:

- Core knowledge is divided into units of manageable size and delivered in a carefully sequenced way within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities for pupils to embed new knowledge so it can be used confidently in real-life situations.
- All teaching is interactive, providing pupils with opportunities to develop skills and discuss complex scenarios in age-appropriate ways.
- Teaching is sensitive to the backgrounds and circumstances of all pupils, recognising that families take many forms, including single-parent families, same-sex parent families, families headed by grandparents, adoptive, foster and kinship care arrangements.
- There is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.
- All teaching materials are age-appropriate, accurate and accessible for all pupils, including those with SEND.

Throughout each year group, appropriate material will be used to assist learning, including books, games, discussions and practical activities. Teachers will make sure all pupils' views are listened to, and will encourage questions and engagement with discussion, answering questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately.

The programme will be designed to focus on all pupils equally, and activities will be planned to ensure all are actively involved.

Use of External Organisations and Materials

Working with external organisations can enhance delivery, bringing specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with children within our local context. However, the school always retains responsibility for content and the way in which children are taught.

We will:

- Check that any external resources are accurate, age and stage appropriate, and unbiased.
- Ask to see materials and a lesson plan in advance.
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents/carers.
- Ensure all materials can be viewed by parents/carers on request.
- Follow our usual safeguarding procedures for any external visitors.
- Ensure that the class teacher is present during any session with an external speaker.
- Be particularly cautious about using resources from organisations with a strong partisan view on a contested topic.

We will not, under any circumstances, work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions, or that do not allow their materials to be shared with parents.

Openness with parents about RHE materials

Schools are required by the 2026 statutory guidance to be transparent with parents about all materials used in RHE. The Mead Infant and Nursery School will:

- Proactively engage parents and make sure they are aware of what is being taught in RHE.
- Inform parents of the curriculum content and the importance of RHE for wellbeing and safety.

- Show parents a representative sample of the resources planned to be used, including knowledge organisers per unit and key vocabulary.
- Ensure that parents can view all curriculum materials used to teach RHE on request via Kapow for Reception and KS1 and over email for Nursery.
- Share all external materials with parents and carers on request.

Parents cannot veto curriculum content, but they have the right to be consulted when developing and reviewing the RHE policy and to see what their children are being taught, especially on sensitive topics.

Where copyright law applies, we will comply with it when sharing resources with parents. Materials may be shared via a parent portal or through a presentation. Parents will be asked to agree not to copy or share materials further except as permitted under copyright law.

For the avoidance of doubt: copyright law affects the way materials are shared but must never be used as a reason to refuse to share them with parents.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Board

The governing board will approve the RHSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. Governors will also ensure that:

- All pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Teaching is accessible to all pupils with SEND.
- Curriculum content and teaching materials are aligned with this statutory guidance.
- Clear information is provided for parents on the subject content, teaching materials and external providers.

The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for making sure that RHE is taught consistently across the school, and for sharing all resources and materials with parents and carers.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RHE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RHE.
- Monitoring pupil progress.
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers have concerns about any aspect of the curriculum.
- Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures to the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching any aspect of RHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

Pupils

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

10. Parents Right to Withdraw

Parents/carers do **not** have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education, as these are statutory requirements for all primary pupils.

This includes teaching about:

- The correct anatomical names for body parts
- Body privacy and personal boundaries
- The concept that each person's body belongs to them

These topics form part of the statutory Health Education and are taught to support safeguarding. All children are therefore required to access this learning. The Mead Infant and Nursery School teaches this in a sensitive and age-appropriate way from Nursery to Year 2 with a focus on supporting children to stay safe.

We recognise that some parents/carers may have questions or concerns about aspects of the RHE curriculum. In such cases, the school will:

- Work in partnership with parents/carers
- Provide opportunities to view materials and discuss content
- Respond sensitively and respectfully to individual concerns

11. Safeguarding

Discussions about sensitive topics in RHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports. All staff should know what to do if they have concerns that a pupil is being neglected or abused.

The school follows the DfE statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE). Staff should also be aware of mandatory reporting duties, including in relation to Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The Government has also introduced a new legal duty (not yet in force) requiring people in regulated activity with children in England to report child sexual abuse to the police or local authority as soon as they become aware of it.

If a session is delivered by an external agency, we will agree in advance how any safeguarding concern would be dealt with.

Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may not be in the best interests of the child. It is equally important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report.

If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately and refer to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

12. Managing Difficult Questions

Pupils may ask questions that go beyond the RHE content covered by the school. Key stage 1 classes will include a 'Wonder Box' where children can post any questions that they have. Teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed.

This may include asking a pupil to speak to their parents or a trusted adult, or signposting to appropriate support services. Teachers may require support and training in handling questions that are better dealt with outside the classroom.

13. Equality and Inclusion

The school is required to comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty, when teaching RHE. We will ensure that topics are taught in a way that does not discriminate against pupils or amount to harassment.

We strongly encourage teaching about healthy, loving relationships and include same-sex parents and other family arrangements when discussing families. We take care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances.

We 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, and makes pupils feel safe, supported, and able to engage with the key messages.

Teaching about gender and relationships will be sensitive and balanced. In line with the 2026 statutory guidance, we will:

- Teach facts about biological sex and body differences in an age-appropriate way.
- Be mindful that beyond facts there is significant debate on some topics and avoid endorsing any particular view or teaching contested ideas as fact.
- Avoid activities which repeat or enforce gender stereotypes.
- Ensure pupils understand that bullying or disrespectful language or behaviour based on any protected characteristic is never appropriate.

14. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

Teaching will be developed to ensure that RHE is accessible for all pupils with SEND and prepares them for adulthood, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years. This applies to both mainstream provision and any specialist provision within the school.

We are aware that pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation, bullying and other issues. RHE is particularly important for these pupils. We will:

- Ensure all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages, stages and additional needs of all pupils.
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed.
- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that is appropriate for them, which may include whole-class settings, small groups, targeted sessions or 1-to-1 discussions.

15. Staff Training and Professional Development

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

Staff are kept informed of developments in key aspects of RHE, including links with safeguarding, inclusion, equality, child protection and anti-bullying, through regular training provided at staff meetings and INSET days.

The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses, to provide support and training to staff teaching RHE.

Staff must be trained in safeguarding and supporting pupils, including recognising the increased possibility of disclosures during or after RHE lessons.

16. Assessment and Monitoring

Class teachers are responsible for the assessment of children's knowledge and skills and should adapt the teaching of content accordingly.

A record of what is taught can be seen in our progression tracker, long, medium and weekly plans.

The delivery of RHE is monitored by the PSHE/RHE subject lead through planning scrutinies, learning walks and discussions with pupils and staff.

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and governors in line with DfE guidance. Parents and carers will be informed annually about any changes to the school's RHE curriculum.

The effectiveness of this policy will be evaluated through a combination of pupil voice, staff feedback, curriculum monitoring and safeguarding records, to ensure that the RHE curriculum is having a positive impact on pupils' knowledge, confidence and safety.

17. Related Policies and Guidance

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- PSHE Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Wellbeing Offer
- Equality Information
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- DfE: Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- DfE: Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025)
- DfE: Working Together to Safeguard Children
- SEND Code of Practice 0 to 25 years

Appendix 1 Curriculum overview – Nursery to Year 2

This overview reflects the Kapow PSHE/RSE scheme. The statutory part of this is structured around **Relationships Education** and **Health and Wellbeing Education**.

Content is delivered through a spiral curriculum, revisiting and building on knowledge each year. Full details are available in the Kapow scheme of work and the school's progression tracker.

EYFS

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (Nursery and Reception), RHE content is aligned to the **EYFS statutory framework**, particularly within **Personal, Social and Emotional Development (PSED)**. This includes the areas of **self-regulation, managing self, and building relationships**. Content is revisited and developed further in Key Stage 1 through a **spiral curriculum approach**, ensuring progression that is appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development.

Year Group	Relationships Education	Health and Wellbeing (including personal safety and my body)	Scheme/Resources
Nursery linked to Early Learning Goals (currently under review)	Talking about families and special people; beginning to build friendships; learning to be kind and take turns.	General wellbeing: Recognising simple feelings; why I am special; beginning to understand how to stay healthy. My body: correct names for some private body parts; underpants rule (NSPCC).	Under review; NSPCC PANTS resources
Reception – linked to Early Learning Goals	Understanding that families are special and should be valued; knowing who my special people are; building positive friendships; sharing; showing care and kindness.	General wellbeing: Identifying and talking about feelings; managing self; self-regulation strategies. Health protection and prevention: hygiene routines and sleep. Physical health and fitness: healthy routines for exercise. Healthy eating: eating healthy and balanced meals. Personal safety: being a safe pedestrian. My body: privacy; correct names for some private body parts; underpants rule (NSPCC).	Kapow PSHE/RSE; NSPCC PANTS resources

Year Group	Relationships Education	Health and Wellbeing (including personal safety and my body)	Scheme/Resources
Year 1	Exploring different family structures; roles in families; characteristics of positive friendships; the importance of self-respect; beginning to understand differences and respect; recognising personal boundaries; what to do if I see something online that worries me; trusted adults.	General wellbeing: Recognising emotions and developing simple strategies to manage them; developing self-esteem and personal qualities. Wellbeing online: How I should behave when I use an online device; how to balance screen time with in person activities; how to stay safe online. Health protection and prevention: Hygiene; who helps me stay healthy; what to do if I feel unwell; how to get help for serious injuries. Personal safety: How to stay safe at home; what is safe for my body; how my body reacts when something feels unsafe; road safety. My body: Body autonomy; correct names for private body parts; recognising unsafe situations and what to do.	Kapow PSHE/RSE; NSPCC PANTS resources
Year 2	Understanding how families are different and the same; developing respectful relationship; understanding personal boundaries; trusted adults; how to seek support; letting others know what is OK for me and what is not OK; recognising bullying; what to do if something I see online worries me.	Wellbeing online: How to stay safe when I am online; how things are shared online and who can see this; what is private information; is everything online real. Health protection and prevention: Dental health and the importance of sleep. Physical health and fitness: Exercise; healthy choices. Healthy eating: Foods that keep me healthy; healthy food and drink choices. Personal safety: How to stay safe in different places, e.g. roads and in/near water. My body: Privacy and boundaries; correct names for body parts; understanding unsafe situations. Knowing how to seek help/report concerns. Growing up: How we grow and change as we get older: e.g. getting taller, losing teeth, more independence.	Kapow PSHE/RSE; NSPCC PANTS resources

Appendix 2 – Anatomically correct vocabulary

Using anatomically correct vocabulary from an early age is a key component of safeguarding. It ensures children can communicate clearly and confidently if they ever need to report abuse. The following vocabulary is taught at The Mead Infant and Nursery School:

Nursery and Reception

	Female	Male
Genitalia	Vulva – the part of the girl’s body on the outside, between her legs.	Penis – the part of the boy’s body used for going to the toilet.
Other	Bottom – rear bottom with two cheeks so we can sit comfortably.	Bottom – rear bottom with two cheeks so we can sit comfortably.

When teaching these terms, the NSPCC Underpants Rule is highlighted: these areas of the body are places that we do not usually look at on others or touch. These are parts of the body which we keep covered by our underwear and which we have a right to keep private.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Term	Female	Male
Genitalia	Vulva – the part of the girl’s body on the outside, between her legs. Vagina – the part of the girl’s body that is inside, between her legs.	Penis – the part of the boy’s body used for going to the toilet. Testicles – small round parts inside a little bag of skin (scrotum), just under the penis. Scrotum – the soft bag of skin that hangs below the penis.
Other	Nipples – small, darker bumps on the chest.	Nipples – small, darker bumps on the chest.

Note: Pupils should understand that all these parts of the body are private. The Underpants Rule is taught in more detail separately.