



Nova Hreod Academy

The best in everyone™

Part of United Learning

Relationships and Sex Education Policy 2026-2027

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Person Responsible for Review: Assistant Principal – Co-curricular (Ben Wilkinson)

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Policy Development, Consultation and Aims

Development of the Policy

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Assistant Principal for character, ks3 and ks4 PSHE lead, the Designated safeguarding lead and tutors. It reflects the statutory requirements set out in the Department for Education (DfE) Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) Statutory Guidance 2025.

Consultation

Nova Hreod Academy consults with parents by:

- Offering at least one evening or daytime consultation session (virtual and in-person options) where leadership and the RSE lead present the curriculum intent, show sample materials and answer questions AND/OR providing an online survey and response form with focused questions and space for free-text comments.
- Feeding back decisions and next steps to all parents, including any changes made in response and how concerns were addressed.
- Offering follow-up clinics or one-to-one meetings for parents with specific concerns.

Nova Hreod Academy consults with pupils through:

- Student Leadership Group reviews,
- Anonymised online drop-boxes.

Nova Hreod Academy consults with staff by:

- Setting a clear staff consultation window linked to curriculum review cycles and sharing lesson resources at least one week before staff delivery of resources.
- Holding dedicated CPD and consultation sessions where teachers can review resources, signpost potential risks or barriers (including for SEND and faith sensitivities), and propose adaptations.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- set out the school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education in line with the DfE statutory guidance (2025);
- promote pupils' physical, mental and emotional wellbeing through an age-appropriate, evidence-informed RSE curriculum;
- ensure pupils develop the knowledge, skills and attributes they need to build positive, safe and respectful relationships, including online;
- support safeguarding by teaching pupils to recognise risks, seek help and report concerns;
- ensure content is inclusive of all pupils and respectful of diversity while not presenting contested views as fact;
- promote transparency by explaining how parents can access curriculum materials, identifying which material constitutes sex education, and how withdrawal from sex education works;



- clarify how RSE is delivered, who is responsible and how teaching is monitored and reviewed.

Statutory Requirements

Nova Hreod Academy delivers Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in line with the Department for Education's statutory guidance (updated July 2025, effective September 2026). RSE is a compulsory part of the curriculum, ensuring all pupils receive accurate, age-appropriate and inclusive teaching on relationships and sex. Provision addresses safeguarding priorities, including online risks, misogyny, violence against women and girls, harmful influences, and personal safety, while promoting mental health, resilience and respect for diversity. RSE is taught within a safe, supportive environment by trained staff, with clear communication to parents and carers, and is regularly reviewed.

Working with Parents

Nova Hreod Academy recognises the importance of parental involvement in their child's education; parents are a child's first and most enduring educators, providing the foundational learning, emotional support, and guidance that shape their development from birth.

It is vital that parents are confident in the content and messaging of the RSE their child receives.

Nova Hreod Academy will ensure that parents are consulted on RSE policy and have access to what their child will learn in RSE.

Overviews of content can be found on the [PSHE page of the school website](#) and the student-facing lesson content can be accessed on request by contacting admin@novahreodacademy.org.uk. Nova Hreod Academy will endeavour to respond to requests within 15 working days but if parents have immediate concerns, please contact your child's year manager using the contact details on the website.

Parental Right to Withdraw Children

Nova Hreod Academy acknowledges the right of parents to withdraw their child from some or all of the sex education provided (except from sex education taught under the science curriculum), but not from relationships education.

Parents wishing to discuss the withdrawal of their child from some or all of the sex education provided should contact the Principal, using the contact information on the website, outlining this request.

In considering such a request, Nova Hreod Academy will use the following process:

- The Principal will meet with the parent (and, if appropriate, the child) to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum and the content that will be covered.
- The Principal will discuss with the parent the benefits of the child receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child, including social or emotional effects of being excluded as well as the likelihood of the child hearing from their peers what was covered (and having that content channelled through a child's voice rather than a teacher's).
- The Principal will outline provision that will be made during lessons where the child has been withdrawn from sex education, which will be appropriate and purposeful.
- Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances (e.g. safeguarding concerns), Nova Hreod Academy will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to



and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Definitions

Relationships Education

Relationships education is designed to help pupils build and maintain positive relationships while also recognising potential risks and harms. As part of this, teaching may cover issues such as preventing sexual abuse or avoiding the sharing of inappropriate material online, without the need to describe any sexual activity in detail.

In line with safeguarding best practice, pupils should also learn the correct names for different parts of the body and be able to use these terms confidently and accurately. These terms can be taught without any reference to, or details of, sexual activity.

Relationships education is compulsory, and parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education or health education.

Relationships education includes teaching about:

- families, including diverse family structures,
- friendships and respectful relationships,
- safe, caring and healthy relationships,
- harmful relationships, sexual harassment and sexual violence,
- boundaries, consent and communication,
- online behaviour, digital safety, harmful online attitudes and image-sharing,
- recognising and reporting unsafe behaviours.

Relationships education does not describe the detail of sexual activity.

Sex Education

Sex education is teaching about:

- sexual activity and sexual decision-making,
- contraception and safer sex,
- sexually transmitted infections (STIs),
- sexual health services,
- intimate relationships and sexual consent in context,



When sharing overviews of content in upcoming units, all content that is considered “sex education” and subject to the right to withdraw will be clearly indicated with a (W).

Curriculum Content and Organisation

The RSE curriculum is delivered through:

- timetabled lessons,
- tutor time,
- assemblies,
- expert-led workshops,
- drop-down days,
- cross-curricular links to Science, PE, Computing and Citizenship.

Nova Hreod Academy uses RSE materials which are created by the central team of subject specialists at United Learning, and then adapted by our own teachers to meet the needs of our pupils. We also use external content from the PSHE association and life lessons to deliver sessions on all topics across the PSHE curriculum to all years.

The majority of RSE lessons at Nova Hreod Academy are delivered by our own teaching staff. The central curriculum is accompanied by guidance and support, and more bespoke training is delivered when lessons cover especially complex or sensitive materials. All teachers receive annual safeguarding training and training on delivery of PSHE content.

Nova Hreod Academy uses external providers to supplement the curriculum at various points throughout the year. When external providers are invited to work with students, parents will be informed about the provider and the nature of the session by Ben Wilkinson, Assistant Principal.

Teaching and Learning

RSE at Nova Hreod Academy is delivered in a way that:

- Has a clear structure to the lesson, with a focus on oracy and recall.
- Staff use well scripted lessons to maintain accuracy and consistency in delivery.
- Is appropriate to age and stage.
- Responsive to pupils.
- Avoids teaching contested views as fact.
- Is scientifically factual, objective and legally accurate.
- Encourages pupils with communication and decision-making skills.
- Encourages open discussion while setting safe boundaries.
- Promotes respect, inclusivity and safeguarding.



- Maintains balance and impartiality.

The content is appropriate to pupils' age and stage of development, while remaining scientifically factual, objective, and legally accurate, and is carefully linked to both local and national contexts. It aims to equip pupils with essential communication and decision-making skills, encouraging open discussion within clearly defined and safe boundaries. The approach promotes respect, inclusivity, and safeguarding, ensuring that all pupils feel supported. It also avoids presenting contested views as established facts and maintains a balanced, impartial perspective throughout.

Staff will:

- use a clear structure to the lesson,
- use ground rules,
- prepare pupils ahead of time where appropriate,
- signpost pupils to support,
- manage disclosures in line with safeguarding procedures,
- balance the need for accuracy with sensitivity.

Responding to Questions

Pupils may ask questions that are outside of the scope of the lesson or what is appropriate for a member of staff to discuss with them. This may be due to the fact that the child in question has been withdrawn from the sex education element of the subject.

Nonetheless, children's curiosity makes it unlikely that an unsatisfied request for information will end there, and it is highly likely that they will seek alternative sources. These are likely to be less reliable and even unsafe.

If a pupil asks a question that a member of staff cannot answer, the following steps will be followed:

- The member of staff will discreetly and sensitively reassure the pupil that it is normal to be curious and explain to the pupil why they are unable to answer the question. They may ask the pupil whether this is something they would feel able to ask a parent about, or signpost to specialist services if appropriate.
- The member of staff will follow safeguarding policies and procedures as appropriate, but even if the question posed does not constitute a safeguarding concern, the RSHE lead and/or the SLT line manager for RSHE will be informed on the same day.
- Leaders will consider the likelihood of the pupil seeking answers to their question/s elsewhere and the possible implications of this. They may consider it appropriate to contact parents to discuss how to best support and guide the pupil.

Inclusivity and Accessibility

Pupils with SEND

All pupils, including those with SEND, have a full entitlement to RSE, and having an additional need is never a reason to restrict access to essential learning about relationships, safety, consent and wellbeing.



Research suggests that children and adults with SEND can be more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Provision of high-quality, adapted RSE is a critical protective factor.

This section should be read in conjunction with the school's SEND Policy and Teaching and Learning Policy.

Teaching and Learning

- Teaching will be personalised through adapted resources, simplified but accurate language, pre-teaching of key vocabulary, visual supports, and highly structured routines for discussion and decision-making.
- Lessons will be paced carefully, use multi-sensory approaches and provide extra processing time.
- Staff will maintain high expectations of dignity, age-appropriate content and respect, ensuring materials reflect diverse families, relationships and identities, including those of young people with SEND.
- As appropriate, planning will be trauma-informed and sensitive to pupils who may have experienced adversity, with clear routes for help-seeking at appropriate points in units. These adaptations support access without lowering ambition or omitting statutory content.

Pupils' Religious and Faith Backgrounds

RSE will respect religious and cultural diversity, uphold pupils' rights to accurate information and safety, and comply with the Equality Act. Teaching will avoid discrimination and protect pupils' dignity.

Principles

- Assume diversity, not uniformity: different pupils of the same faith will interpret teachings differently.
- Meet statutory RSE outcomes while treating faith backgrounds fairly and avoiding discrimination.
- Prioritise pupils' wellbeing, dignity and safeguarding when adapting content.
- Engage fully with parents, pupils and, where appropriate, faith leaders and members of the community when consulting on the curriculum.

Teaching, Learning and Curriculum

Teachers and leaders must balance pupils' rights to access all statutory content with sensitivity to religious and cultural diversity.

When planning lessons, Nova Hreod Academy will:

- Offer neutral, balanced coverage: RSE should be delivered in a balanced and neutral way. This is especially important where religious and cultural perspectives mean that pupils may have strong beliefs about some content. Teachers will present accurate faith viewpoints alongside secular and other perspectives, so pupils see a balanced picture.
- Use inclusive imagery and language: ensure visuals show religious and cultural diversity and avoid metaphors that may confuse pupils with mobility needs or ASD.
- Manage discussions carefully: deliver content in an objective way and use ground rules and clear boundaries to manage pupil discussion.



- Map objectives to need: teachers start from the required learning outcomes and identify where faith perspectives are most likely to be relevant (e.g. family, marriage, contraception, gender).
- Build in alternatives: consider additional consultation with parents and pupils to ensure sensitive delivery where appropriate.
- Consider faith perspectives: build in opportunities to reflect on RSE objectives through the lens of faith teachings when appropriate and helpful.
- Employ distancing techniques: use stories, role-play, third-person scenarios or case studies to explore sensitive issues safely.

Complaints

Any complaints about the Relationships and Sex Education programme should be made in accordance with the school's usual complaints procedure. This can be accessed via the school website.

Approval and Review

- This policy is approved by the governing body.
- It is reviewed annually, or sooner if national guidance changes or it is otherwise appropriate to make amendments.
- The RSHE Lead is responsible for coordinating the review process.
- The policyholder is always a member of the Senior Leadership team.

