



The Cowplain School

Work hard. Enjoy learning. Achieve highly.

Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Adopted: Summer 2025

Review Date: Summer 2026

Section 1

The Cowplain School is committed to delivering a relevant, effective and responsible Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education (RSHE) programme. This policy outlines our approach to equipping students with knowledge, skills and values to support their personal development and prepare them for life. It aligns with our school ethos: *Work Hard, Enjoy Learning, Achieve Highly* and curriculum aims of *Thinking Hard, Developing Character* and *Understanding Diversity*.

The policy is available on the School website and is reviewed and approved by the Academy Trust annually.

1.1 Aims

At The Cowplain School, the aims of RSHE education are to:

- Deliver high quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate RSHE.
- Ensure comprehensive coverage of statutory content: the key concepts of Relationships, Sex and Health education to equip students for the wider world.
- Prepare students for puberty, promoting hygiene and understanding of sexual development.
- Foster a positive, inclusive culture around sexuality, identity and healthy relationships.
- Create a structured and safe framework for the delivery of sensitive topics.
- Ensure students know how and when to ask for help and where to access support.
- Support students in developing resilience, confidence, empathy and self-respect.
- Enable students to know how and where to access help and support.

1.2 Definitions

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE)

RSHE is:

- Lifelong learning enhancing the emotional, social and cultural development of students.
- Knowledge of respectful relationships, sexual health, consent and safe choices, giving students confidence to make sound decisions when facing risks or challenges.

Regarding the Relationships aspect, knowledge includes:

- Friendships, the importance of caring, stable and mutually supportive relationships, and understanding feelings when in a relationship.

- The different types of committed, stable relationships, the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships, the importance of marriage as a relationship choice and why it must be freely entered into.
- How relationships can contribute to human happiness and their importance for raising children, highlighting the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children and characteristics of successful parenting.
- Judgement about when relationships have become unsafe, seeking help or advice and reporting concerns about others.

RSHE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It teaches children and young people to understand human sexuality, to respect themselves and others and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity so that they can develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

1.3 Roles and responsibilities

The Academy Trust

The Academy Trust will monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy by reviewing students' progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes. They will hold the Principal to account for the implementation of the policy.

The Principal and Senior Leadership Team

The Principal, with support from the Senior Leadership Team, will ensure that staff are supported and up to date with policy changes. They will ensure that RSHE is well led, effectively managed and well planned across various subjects (to avoid unnecessary duplication of topics) and that the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation.

The Head of School will manage and monitor requests to withdraw students from the non-statutory and non-science components of sex education.

The Senior Leadership Team will ensure that teaching is age-appropriate, delivered in ways that are accessible to all students with SEND and that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled appropriately. They will ensure that teaching delivered by any external organisation is age-appropriate and accessible for students. They will liaise with parents regarding any concerns or opinions regarding RSHE provision.

Staff

Teachers of RSHE are responsible for:

- Ensuring that they are up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements.
- Attend and engage in professional development training to support the delivery of RSHE.

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way, ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Modelling positive attitudes towards RSHE.
- Monitoring student progress in RSHE.
- Encourage students to communicate concerns regarding their social, personal and emotional development in confidence, listen to their needs and support them seriously.
- Apply school Safeguarding practices, procedures and policies to any disclosures that are made to staff as part of delivering the RSHE curriculum.

Parents

The Cowplain School expects parents to share the responsibility of relationships and sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents to create an open home environment where students can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school RSHE. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed.

Students

Students are expected to attend the RSHE lessons that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still an essential part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development. The school expects students to recognise this.

Students should support one another with issues that arise through RSHE by listening in class and being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs. Complying with confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Students who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the **School Behaviour Policy**.

We also hope that students will feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, in confidence, regarding any concerns they have in school related to relationships, sex education or otherwise.

1.4 The Legal Framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Education Act (1996) Sections 406 and 407
- The Equality Act (2010)
- DfE (2024) 'Keeping Children Safe in Education'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'

- DfE (2015) 'National Curriculum in England: Science Programmes of Study'
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

1.5 Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including national and local guidance.

Staff Consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.

Parent Consultation – parents were invited to share their views via email or an electronic form.

Student Consultation – we investigated exactly what students want from their RSHE provision.

Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with Trustees and ratified.

Section 2

2.1 Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1.

The RSHE curriculum is spiral and progressive from Year 7 to Year 11, adapting to student needs and current issues. This may result with in-year changes as and when necessary. The curriculum is always age appropriate.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents upon request.

RSHE will be delivered in RSHE lessons and in Physical Education, Reflection Time and Science.

The curriculum will build on the foundation of the Relationships Education delivered in primary school. By the end of secondary school The Cowplain School expects students to know the information set out at Appendix 2.

The school believes that an integrated, whole-school approach to the teaching and promotion of health and wellbeing will have a positive impact on behaviour and attainment. By the end of secondary school The Cowplain School expects students to know the information set out at Appendix 3.

2.2 Delivery of RSHE

It is important that the Cowplain School implements the RSHE Policy consistently and provides effective provision for all students. We encourage teachers to plan lessons that are specific to the needs of the students in that class, and responsive to their behaviour and development. Lessons will be delivered in line with the school's curriculum model of *Thinking Hard, Developing Character* and *Understanding Diversity*.

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance.
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, development stage and background of our students.
- Are evidence based and contain robust facts and statistics.
- Are from credible sources.
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches.
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress.

2.3 Dealing with difficult questions

Staff training will include sessions on how to deal with difficult questions. There may still be times when staff are faced with a difficult question in class that they feel

uncomfortable or ill equipped to answer. In this case, they may wish to put the question to one side and seek advice from the Senior Leadership Team. Teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Ground rules in class are essential when discussing sensitive subject matter. Some strategies staff may use to support this might be:

- An anonymous question box; this will enable students to feel more comfortable to ask questions without being identified.
- Making the classroom a zone of silence; this means that whatever is discussed in the classroom stays in the classroom and should not be brought up at any other time. We hope this will give students the sense that they are in a safe zone to speak freely about sex and relationships.

2.4 Students with special educational needs

The School works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of students of all ranges of abilities. Staff should adapt RSHE lessons to ensure that all members of the class can access the information fully. The School will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all students have access to the same information.

2.5 Withdrawal from RSHE

The Cowplain School hopes that parents will feel comfortable with, and understand the importance of, the education provided to their children as described in this policy.

Part of RSHE provision is sex education. The Cowplain School wants parents and students to feel assured that sex education will be delivered at a level appropriate to both the age and development of students, and that it is safe to voice opinions and concerns relating to the sex education provision.

Parents of children in secondary academies have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from the non-statutory and non-science components of the sex education aspects of RSHE. Parents cannot withdraw their child from Relationships or Health Education, or the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum for science.

Before withdrawing or making a request, the School strongly urges parents to carefully consider their decision as sex education is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development.

Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from sex education should put their request in writing and send it to the Head of School who will arrange a meeting to discuss their

concerns. Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school 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.

If a student is excused from sex education the School will ensure that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record.

2.6 Complaints

Parents or carers who have complaints or concerns regarding the RSHE curriculum should contact the School and follow the **School's Complaints Policy**.

2.7 Equal opportunities

The School has duties under the Equalities Act 2010 to ensure that students are not discriminated against because of their sex, race, disabilities, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or pregnancy or maternity. RSHE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged, and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the **School's Behaviour Policy**.

2.8 Safeguarding and confidentiality

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where students feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality will be provided to all teachers.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a safeguarding concern. If this is the case, the school's safeguarding policies will be followed.

If a staff member is approached by a student under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- Ensure that the student is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active.
- Encourage the student to talk to their parent or carer. Students may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the school will encourage this as much as possible.

- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is informed that a student under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.

Students with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the Designated Safeguarding Lead to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

2.9 Harmful sexual behaviour

The School takes the issue of harmful sexual behaviour very seriously, recognising the “widespread incidence of sexual harassment, abuse, and violence among young people”. (Ofsted, 2021).

The RSHE curriculum (and wider curriculum) specifically addresses sexual harassment, online abuse and sexual violence. It also addresses safeguarding risks (including online risks), issues of consent, and what constitutes a healthy relationship both online and offline.

As a school we provide effective pastoral support and are alert to factors that increase a child’s vulnerability, or potential vulnerability, such as mental ill health, domestic abuse, having additional needs, and being at greater risk of exploitation and/or of feeling unable to report abuse (for example, girls and LGBT children).

In addition to the RSHE curriculum, the school has within both its **Child Protection Policy** and within its **Behaviour Policy**, procedures to deal with harmful sexual behaviour. The policies include details of appropriate sanctions that are consistently applied and that reflect the messages that are taught across the curriculum and which are promoted through the school’s approach to Prejudicial Behaviour. Incidents of such behaviour are logged and are addressed through a combination of sanction and education. The data is analysed and compared with the outcomes of student voice work to ensure that trends are identified and appropriate actions and curriculum developments are implemented.

Staff are aware of the school’s requirement to immediately report allegations of sexual harassment, abuse, and violence as both behaviour and safeguarding issues. Students are supported to report concerns about harmful sexual behaviour, and staff are aware of the barriers that could prevent a student from making a disclosure, for example communication needs.

Section 3

3.1 Monitoring, review and evaluation

The educational and personal needs of our students develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RSHE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our students, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason, we review the RSHE curriculum annually, and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy or curriculum.

We aim to monitor the effectiveness of our sex education provision through:

- Feedback from students.
- Feedback from parents.
- Feedback from staff.
- Classroom observations.

The School will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from students, staff and parents, in addition to further development made evident through classroom observations, and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

3.2 Support

We hope that students will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex relationships education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that students respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

Students and parents can seek advice and support from:

Matron/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs S Williams

Heads of Year – Mrs C Dodd (Year 11); Miss L Standen (Year 10); Mr G Elliot (Year 9); Miss H Dennis (Year 8); Mr M Simmons (Year 7).

Head of School/Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mr J Colebrook

Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSHE – Miss Z Carter-Brown

3.3 Agencies regularly working in or on behalf of the school:

YServices: Xperience Youth Centre, Trinity Street, Fareham, Hampshire, PO16 7SJ.

School of Sexuality Education, Collective Auction Rooms, 5-7 Buck Street, NW1 8NJ.
Charity number: 1193392.

School nurses are based at Old Gym, Fort Southwick, James Callaghan Drive, PO17 6AR. Direct line 02392 224505.

The School will only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses.

3.4 Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Policy is reviewed annually by the Senior Leadership Team and Trustees as part of the self-evaluation cycle. Appropriate action is taken if changes are required.

3.5 Other Relevant Policies

This Policy should be used with reference to the following policies:

Anti-Bullying Policy

Child Protection Policy

Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Policy

Single Equality Plan and Equalities Objective

A copy of the School's Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy will be available online at www.cowplainschool.co.uk

Date Reviewed and approved:	Summer 2025	Reviewed by:	ZCB	Next Review:	Summer 2026
Summary of changes made:	<p>Section 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction – additional information included. • Aims re-worded. • Definitions simplified for clarity. <p>Section 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum coverage refined. • Safeguarding wording reviewed and altered by JCK. 				

Appendix 1 – Curriculum Map



Appendix 2 – RSE Secondary stage curriculum and outcomes

Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there are different types of committed, stable relationships • how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict ◦ reconciliation and ending relationships, this includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • the impact of viewing harmful content • that specifically sexually explicit material, for example pornography, presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships • how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn, in all contexts, including online
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship • that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause • that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing • about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour • how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
--	---

The National Curriculum for Science covers:

Key Stage 3

- reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta, and
- reproduction in plants, including flower structure, wind and insect pollination, fertilisation, seed and fruit formation and dispersal, including quantitative investigation of some dispersal mechanisms.

Key Stage 4

- hormones in human reproduction, hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception,
- communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDs), and
- genes and sex determination in humans.

Appendix 3 – Health Education Secondary stage curriculum and outcomes

Mental wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary • that happiness is linked to being connected to others • how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns • common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression) • how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health • the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness
Internet safety and harms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online • how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours
Physical health and fitness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress • the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardio-vascular ill-health • about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation

Healthy eating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions • the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances • the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood • the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency • awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks • the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so
Health and prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist • (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening • the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination • the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn
Basic first aid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic treatment for common injuries • life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR • the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed

Changing adolescent body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing • the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health
---------------------------------	---