Haberdashers' West Midlands Academies Trust

Haberdashers' Abraham Darby

Relationships and Sex Education

2026-2027

Named Responsibility of Policy	**Mr C Stanyon-Jones (Assistant Vice Principal – HAD)**
Date of Policy	**September 2026**
Next Review due by	**September 2027**
Review Cycle	**1 year**
Governor Accountability	**Pupil and Staff Welfare Committee** **Teaching and Learning Standards Committee**
This policy will be readily accessible to Parents/Carers/Staff/Visitors/Members of the Public through the schools' websites	

Guidance and Rationale

From September 2026, all schools must have an up-to-date written policy for relationships education or, where they teach sex education, for RSE. This policy sets out the framework for Relationships and Sex Education at Haberdashers' Abraham Darby providing clarity on how our RSE curriculum is informed, organised and delivered.

Our schools use the Life Lesson curriculum. This curriculum provides coverage for all statutory content, as laid out by the 2025 Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education guidance, through an evidence based, peer-led and relational approach. The Life Lessons programme of study will be delivered by mentor, twice a week during mentor time. There will be opportunities across the academic year to draw on expertise of external providers. For example, SMASHED live and the local authority. Parents will be notified of any external workshops and assemblies relating to PSHE and RSE.

The Curriculum

RSHE = Relationships, (optional) sex, health education

PSHE = Personal, social, health and economic education (includes everything in RSE, plus some extra topics, such as communities, identity, body image and financial education)

The Life Lessons resources are designed to improve behaviour and attitudes amongst pupils, helping them to build and maintain healthy relationships and be kind to the people around them. They are taught to understand their feelings, regulate their emotions and make healthy choices that allow them to stay safe, well and happy. There are lessons on respecting diversity, navigating the online world, managing their money and having high aspirations for their futures.

The Life Lesson's curriculum is organised into themes:

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Understanding myself</th><th colspan="2">Self with others</th><th colspan="3">Self within the world</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">• Physical wellbeing
• Mental health
• Understanding our emotions
• The way we grow and change during puberty
• Making choices to stay safe and well
• Drugs, alcohol and tobacco
8 units of study</td><td colspan="2">• Families
• Friendships
• Reducing hurtful behaviour and bullying
• Identifying safe and unsafe relationships
• Respecting self and others
• Fixing or leaving relationships that have gone wrong</td><td colspan="3">• Responsibilities and power
• Understanding other people: how we are the same and how we are different (including the Equality Act)
• Media and the online world
• Economic wellbeing: Money
• Dreams, work, careers and volunteering</td></tr>
<tr><td>Wellbeing</td><td>Healthy choices</td><td>My body & Me</td><td>Healthy Relationships</td><td>Healthy Intimate Relationships</td><td>Identity & Community</td><td>Digital Lives</td><td>Aspiration & money</td></tr>
</table>

We understand that some topics are particularly sensitive, but all content is covered in an age-appropriate way, and support both the statutory RSHE guidance and the Equality Act. The purpose of teaching these topics is to help young people to discuss important issues and understand their own values and beliefs.

Parental Engagement

We continue to be committed to liaising with parents and carers about all aspects of their child's education. As such, we understand the importance of the role of parents and carers in the development of their child's understanding about relationships, sex and health. The law requires schools to consult with parents and carers on their RSE policy. Consultation must be carried out when the policy is formed and subsequently whenever it is updated.

We understand that parents may have concerns about some aspects of RSE. Therefore, every September, we will notify all parents and carers when the policy has been reviewed, updated and uploaded to the school website and we will provide a window of opportunity for all parents and carers to attend a video call to explain and discuss the Life Lessons curriculum.

Parents/ carers have the right to view Life Lessons curriculum material at request subject to copyright and distribution laws.

Parental Withdrawal

Before granting any request for withdrawal of a child from sex education, the parent/ carer must write to the Principal explaining why they want to withdraw their child. A meeting will then be set up to discuss the request with parents to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child.

Parents of both primary and secondary-aged students will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of the National Curriculum for Science (which includes subject content such as reproduction in humans and plants, hormones in reproduction, hormone and non-hormone methods of contraception communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans).

Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school and providing notification to the Headteacher in writing) from any or all aspects of Sex Education (other than those as listed above) up to and until three terms before the age of 16. From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. For example, if a pupil turns 16 during the autumn term, the pupil can opt back into sex education at any time after the start of the previous autumn term.

All sex education lessons that a parent can withdraw their child from are highlighted in yellow on the curriculum below.

Sex education focuses on ensuring that young people have the information to make the best choices for themselves. Good sex education empowers young people to have firm boundaries, say no when they do not want something to happen and to avoid being in dangerous situations. It allows students to explore consent, boundaries and avoiding unhealthy intimate relationships.

Inclusion

The Life Lesson's curriculum provides resources to support both the acquisition of knowledge and the development of skills. Each lesson has a "Life Lesson" objective, designed as a tangible way of practising RSHE skills within an appropriate topic. This is achieved through activities, which give the students practical ways to apply and rehearse what they've learned.

The Life Lessons resources are designed to be inclusive in several different ways. Some examples of the way Life Lessons make their resources more inclusive include:

- Clear, consistent lesson structures that reduce cognitive load
- A spiral curriculum that builds knowledge progressively over time
- Dual coding is used to provide pictorial support for learners for whom text can be intimidating or harder to read
- 'Scaffolding' activities, so that tasks are broken down into small, manageable chunks
- Tips, word banks and sentence starters to help young people come up with their own ideas, without having to start from a blank page
- Keywords to support learning new vocabulary
- Emotions characters, to support young people's understanding of their feelings

Managing difficult questions

Students may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality. Given ease of access to the internet, students whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. At Haberdashers' Abraham Darby the PSHE Lead will provide advice on the type of questions which are appropriate and inappropriate to ask and answer within a whole-class setting and the use of Ground Rules with students will support this process.

Depending on the nature of the questions asked, staff will use their skill and discretion to determine whether a question will be answered at the time. They may decide to explain to a student that their question will be returned to later, and they may decide to discuss possible responses to questions with a parent, the PSHE Lead, the DSL or a member of

the Senior Leadership Team. Answers to questions may then be followed up with individuals, small groups or a whole class as deemed to be appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Senior Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in RSE.

Staff have received training in RSE delivery through the National College and staff follow statutory Department for Education (DfE) guidance and school policies to create a safe learning environment. Rules include enforcing strict ground rules, implementing distancing techniques to protect pupil privacy, maintaining appropriate boundaries, and following safeguarding protocols if a disclosure occurs.

Statutory Guidance

This policy was reviewed and developed by the senior leadership team and will be reviewed annually. It was developed in response to the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- 16-19 Study Programmes Guidance (DfE/ESFA, 2019)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, 2017)
- Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2016)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015)
- Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, 2014)
- National Curriculum in England – Key Stages 1-4 (DfE, 2014)

Year 7

Theme	Lesson Topics
1. Wellbeing	• Emotions • Mental health • Resilience • Impact of exercise and sleep • Personal hygiene
2. Healthy Choices	• Smoking and vaping • Safety in different environments • First aid • Puberty • Body changes during puberty • Genitals and reproductive systems
3. My Body and Me	• Menstruation
4. Healthy Relationships	• Heathy relationships • Friendships • Healthy boundaries • Privacy and our bodies • Bullying
5. Healthy intimate relationships	• What is sexual harassment and how to stop it
6. Identity and Community	• Personal identity • Harmful stereotypes • Belonging • Healthy communities • Discrimination • Equality Act • Preventing sexism
7. Digital Lives	• Healthy relationships with devices • Privacy online • Impact of online content • Money and the online world
8. Aspiration and Money	• Ambitions and goals • Developing strengths and interests • Future aspirations
9. Transition	• Starting secondary school

Year 8

Theme	Lesson Topics
10. Wellbeing	• Mental health • Positive mindset • Who am I? • Impact of diet on physical health • Overcoming barriers to physical exercise
11. Healthy Choices	• Alcohol • Legal and illegal drugs • Risks of trying new things
12. My Body and Me	• Understanding sexual desires • Body positivity • Genitals and FGM • Vaccinations and healthcare • What happens during sexual intercourse • Contraception e.g. condoms
13. Healthy Relationships	• Heathy relationships • Friendships • Power dynamics • Active bystanders • Ending relationships with kindness
14. Healthy intimate relationships	• Signs of a healthy, romantic relationship • Managing feelings in a relationship • Communicating romantic feelings • Impact of viewing pornography • Preventing sexual harassment • How to respond to controlling behaviour
15. Identity and Community	• Your heritage • British values • Supporting people to love who they love • Supporting disabled community • How to prevent racism
16. Digital Lives	• Impact of internet on wellbeing • Positive impact of internet • Online behaviour • Algorithms – do they unite or divide? • Understanding what is or is not real online
17. Aspiration and Money	• Preparing for world of work • Budgeting for teenagers • How to avoid losing money e.g. gambling, loot boxes, advertising manipulation

Year 9

Theme	Lesson Topics
18. Wellbeing	• Self regulation techniques • Experiencing complex emotions (including mental health) • Why can it be hard to talk about feelings?
19. Healthy Choices	• Responding to emergencies involving drugs • Staying safe in public spaces • Avoiding criminal exploitation
20. My Body and Me	• Positive body image • Affects of hormonal and mood cycles • Checking our own health • Blood, organ and stem cell donations • Protection from STIs
21. Healthy Relationships	• Vulnerabilities in relationships • Avoiding pressure from peers • Managing peer influence • Managing feelings round change
22. Healthy intimate relationships	• Deciding if you are ready for romance and intimacy • Sexual consent • Connection in romance relationships • Online cultures and connection • How can bystanders reduce sexual harassment? • Signs of unhealthy sexual behaviour • Reducing domestic violence
23. Identity and Community	• Influences on sense of identity • Stereotypes – spread hate and make money • Building belonging • Healthy communities • Impact of sexism • Why does sexism exist today • Creating an anti-discrimination school • Talking about gender with respect • What are my rights?
24. Digital Lives	• Impact of online choices • Impact of deepfakes • Responding to online influence • Online addictions
25. Aspiration and Money	• Future pathways • Hugh expectations for the future • How to achieve goals • Making financial decisions • Avoiding financial scams and exploitation

Year 10

Theme	Lesson Topics
26. Wellbeing	• Healthy and unhealthy coping strategies • Techniques for improving mental health and low mood • Improving self esteem • Overcoming barriers to healthy lifestyle
27. Healthy Choices	• Smoking and vaping • Effects of illegal drugs • Being safe around alcohol • Managing powerful influences • Life saving skills
28. My Body and Me	• Media and body image • Pregnancy and foetal development • What does it mean to be a parent? • Healthy choices around contraception
29. Healthy Relationships	• Managing conflict healthily • Healthy boundaries
30. Healthy intimate relationships	• Civil partnerships and marriages • Communicating healthily in romantic relationships • How can someone understand sexual pleasure and attunement • Communicating choices about sex and intimacy • Impact of culture and technology on romantic relationships • Responding to sexual behaviour online • Influence of gender stereotypes on sexual violence • Effects of sexual harassment • Preventing controlling behaviour in relationships
31. Identity and Community	• Measuring self worth • Gender norms and behaviour • Tolerance • Life in Britain • Complexity of discrimination • Social model of disability • Expressing religion and beliefs • Money and happiness
32. Digital Lives	• Affect of AI on lives • Building a positive reputation online • Why can extremism spread online?
33. Aspiration and Money	• Strengths, interests and education – future pathways • Decisions about the future • Finding local locally and internationally • Saving money and budgeting

Year 11

Theme	Lesson Topics
34. Wellbeing	• Balancing everyday pressures and opportunities • Building resilience
35. Healthy Choices	• Impact of addiction on mental health • How to avoid exploitation and radicalisation • Feeling safe and confident around new people
36. My Body and Me	• Healthy choices around cosmetic procedures • What health issues can affect people with female bodies? • What does it mean to be a parent? • Fertility, infertility and miscarriage • Choice to end or continue pregnancy • How to access healthcare • Testing and protecting each other from STIs
37. Healthy Relationships	• Signs of a positive friendship • Influences on ability to connect with others • Dealing with grief and loss
38. Healthy intimate relationships	• Healthy and positive romantic partnership • Impact of combining alcohol and drugs with intimacy • Impact on online cultures and content on sexual relationships • Supporting survivors of sexual violence and harassment
39. Identity and Community	• Values and decisions • Belonging • Anti racism
40. Digital Lives	• Online world • Equality and respect online • Data – money and influence
41. Aspiration and Money	• Using the internet to achieve goals • Tackling challenges to goals and dreams • Rights and responsibilities at work • Making financial decisions • Gambling: making healthy choices
42. Transition	• Completing secondary school