

Swanwick School and Sports College



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Contents: Sections

1. Introduction
2. What is RSE?
3. Curriculum Provision
4. Curriculum overview and delivery
5. Curriculum content (external)
6. Equality
7. Roles and Responsibilities
8. Engaging with parents and carers
9. Quality Assurance
10. Policy Process including monitoring
11. Links to other policies
12. Appendix

1. Introduction:

This policy outlines the school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education, (RSE) and includes information about our provision for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Our RSE curriculum is underpinned by the statutory guidance *"Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, and teachers"* (DfE July 2025).

At the heart of our RSE provision is our school ethos of 'Enjoy, Achieve, Exceed'. We are committed to delivering an inclusive supportive curriculum that enables all pupils to access learning in a way that is meaningful and relevant to them. Our approach to RSE and PSHE ensures that pupils 'enjoy' their learning through a safe, respectful and engaging environment where they feel confident to ask questions and explore ideas. Our RSE and PSHE curriculum plays a vital role in preparing pupils for adult life. It places a strong emphasis on developing the highest possible levels of independence, communication and personal understanding, appropriate to each pupil's needs.

In line with the Children and Social Work Act, 2017, all schools are required to provide Relationship Education, RSE and Health Education as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. This policy is further informed by Section 80A of the Education Act 2002, which requires schools to provide a curriculum that promotes the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepares them for responsibilities and experiences of later life.

While sex education is not compulsory in primary schools, we follow Department for Education (DfE) guidance introducing sex education in Years 5 and 6, including teaching about conception and birth, as part of the National Curriculum for Science. This ensures that pupils are equipped with accurate knowledge and understanding at a developmentally appropriate stage.

At SSSC, our curriculum is responsive and flexible. We recognise the importance of carefully adapting content, delivery and pace to ensure accessibility for all learners. It is informed by pupils' individual needs, development levels and EHCP outcomes, as well as local and national context, emerging issues and safeguarding priorities. This ensures that our RSE provision remains relevant, appropriate and effective in supporting pupils to stay safe healthy and prepared for life beyond school.

2. What is RSE?

Relationship Sex Education (RSE) is a key element of our wider personal development provision and forms an essential part of lifelong learning. It encompasses the physical, moral, social and emotional aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, and sexual health.

Effective RSE is important for promoting and protecting the wellbeing of all pupils. It provides children and young people with accessible knowledge and skills, enabling them to make informed, responsible and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. At SSSC, RSE also supports our Learning Heroes, helping pupils to cultivate and demonstrate positive personal characteristics. Through our curriculum, pupils are encouraged to develop resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.

RSE is a fundamental part of our safeguarding provision; it supports prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right, understand healthy and unhealthy behaviours, and develop the confidence to seek help and report concerns. In line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education*, this preventative education is delivered through a whole-school approach. By promoting an understanding of safe, healthy relationships, RSE acts as a protective factor for all children and young people.

Within this policy, and in line with DfE guidance:

Relationships Education focuses on the building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to respectful friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults, including online.

Health Education supports pupils in understanding physical health and mental wellbeing, focusing on recognising the link between the two and being able to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Sex Education includes learning about human reproduction, including conception and birth, as well as sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. This draws on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in the national curriculum for science.

We also adopt the Sex Education Forum's (sexeducationforum.org.uk | [Working together for quality relationships and sex education](#)) broader understanding of RSE as learning about sex, sexuality, emotions, relationships, sexual health and ourselves. In line with this, our RSE provision is underpinned by the following principles:

- *Be accurate and factual, covering a comprehensive range of information about sex, relationships, the law and sexual health, in order to make informed choices.*
- *Be positively inclusive in terms of gender, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, religion or belief or other life-experience.*

- *Promote a critical awareness of the different attitudes and views on sex and relationships within society such as peer norms and those portrayed in the media;*
- *Be part of lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It should reflect the age and level of the learner;*
- *Be relevant and meet the needs of children and young people, and actively involve them as participants, advocates and evaluators in developing good quality provision.*

As a special school, we ensure that RSE content is carefully adapted and personalised so that all pupils can access learning in ways that are meaningful, appropriate and supportive of their individual developmental pathways.

3. Curriculum Provision

Aims

At SSSC our RSE curriculum aims to:

- provide accurate information to all pupils, that is either developmentally appropriate or age-appropriate dependent upon the needs at that time.
- Equip pupils with the knowledge and skills that form the foundation of healthy, positive and respectful relationships in all contexts.
- support pupils to develop as kind, caring and responsible individuals who show respect for themselves and others.
- promote respect, tolerance and understanding of diversity, including, different families, cultures, faiths and beliefs.
- ensure pupils understand their rights and responsibilities within a range of relationships, including the importance of consent, fairness and mutual respect.
- enable pupils to recognise how to keep themselves and others safe both off and online.
- support pupils in recognising and managing a range of emotions in healthy ways, including within friendships and relationships.
- develop pupils ability to self-regulate and to build resilience, confidence and positive mental wellbeing.
- equip pupils with the skills to manage risk, and make informed and responsible decisions that promote their safety and wellbeing.
- ensure pupils can recognise different forms of abuse, including online abuse, know how to seek help, and understand that abuse is never the fault of the victim.
- promote knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles, including the importance of physical activity, balanced nutrition and adequate sleep.
- Prepare pupils for the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty in a sensitive and inclusive manner.
- Ensure pupils understand and can manage menstruation with confidence and dignity, including awareness of available support and facilities within school.
- Provide an age-appropriate understanding of human reproduction and birth, in line with statutory requirements

- reduce stigma attached to health issues, in particular relating to mental health, and discourage the pejorative use of language related to ill health.

Guiding Principles:

Our aims are underpinned the set of guiding principles outlined by the Department of Education in July 2025. These are:

- a. Engagement with pupils. We use pupil voice to evaluate how relevant and engaging RSE is to children's lives throughout our RSE programme. We enable students to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers.
- b. Engagement and transparency with parents and carer. Parents are recognised as partners in their child's RSE. Parents and carers are consulted on the RSE policy, provision and supported to discuss RSE content at home. (See section 7 for more information.)
- c. Positivity. Our RSE builds positive attitudes and skills, promoting healthy norms about relationships,
- d. Careful sequencing. We recognise that young people can start developing healthy behaviour and relationship skills as soon as they start school. We sequence teaching so that pupils are supported and equipped with the knowledge to navigate different experiences in a positive way before they occur, and to prevent harms.
- e. Relevant and responsive. We develop the curriculum to be relevant, age and stage appropriate and accessible to pupils in their area, where appropriate working with local partners and other bodies to understand specific local issues and ensure needs are met.
- f. Skilled delivery of participative education. The curriculum is delivered by skilled, trained staff.
- g. Whole school approach. The curriculum is delivered as part of a whole school approach to wellbeing and positive relationships.

4. Curriculum Overview and Delivery

At SSSC RSE forms a key part of the school's wider Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum, promotes pupils' health, wellbeing, relationships and preparation for adult life.

Our RSE curriculum is delivered through a progressive, well sequenced curriculum designed to meet the needs of all pupils. It is adapted across the pathways and year groups, ensuring accessibility and inclusion. The curriculum follows a spiral model, enabling pupils to revisit themes, deepen understanding and build knowledge over time. Learning is structured around three core strands:

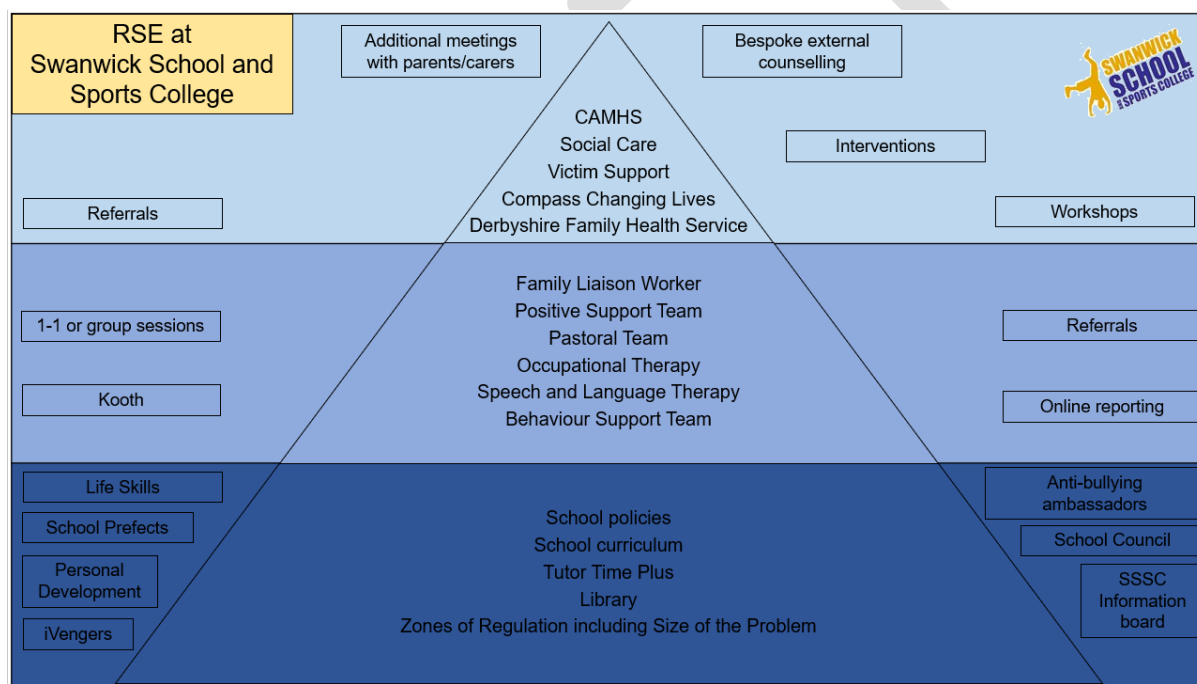
- Health and Wellbeing
- Relationships and Sex Education
- Living in the Wider World.

Key elements of our provision include:

1. A caring, inclusive ethos that models and promotes respectful and positive relationships across the school community.
2. A planned programme of adapted RSE delivered through PSHE.
3. Teaching within the Life Skills curriculum, including interpersonal skills.

4. Delivery through Science, in line with the National Curriculum, alongside content agreed with the Personal Development Lead.
5. Opportunities within other curriculum areas, for example Drama and English
6. Assemblies that address relationships, wellbeing and personal development in a timely and responsive way.
7. Tutor Time Plus activities that reinforce key learning.
8. Strong pastoral support systems for all pupils
9. Access to appropriate information resources and guidance materials.
10. Drop-in clinics or other forms of enhanced provision e.g. visits by the school nurse, Compass services.
11. Targeted intervention, where appropriate, with vulnerable individuals.
12. Positive role models through Learning Heroes.
13. Responsive teaching and support following incidents or emerging issues.

At SSSC we continually promote RSE throughout our school day. The following diagram shows some of the universal, specific and targeted approaches to supporting our pupils and RSE.



A safe environment

At SSSC we are committed to creating a safe learning environment, where RSE lessons are underpinned by shared ground rules, these have been created in collaboration with the School Council and have last been reviewed in June 2026. These ensure that pupils feel comfortable, respected and confident to ask and answer questions around these important, and sometimes sensitive topics. To support this, PSHE and RSE are delivered by each pupil's Form Tutor, alongside their class Teaching Assistant. This consistent approach allows teaching to be led by staff who know the pupils well, enabling them to respond sensitively, adapt

content appropriately and build on established, trusting relationships. Within this environment staff will:

- contribute to a whole-school culture where pupils feel confident to seek help, support and information about a range of sensitive topics.
- avoid making assumptions about pupils' abilities, backgrounds and experiences.
- use distancing techniques, such as stories, characters, puppets in depersonalised scenarios when discussing sensitive issues.
- set a calm, matter-of-fact tone, encouraging pupils to discuss issues in a sensible, respectful and mature way.
- Provide appropriate support to any pupil with lived experience of issues raised, including offering alternative ways to access the learning.
- provide a strengths-based approach and do not use shock, instruction or glamourisation when teaching sensitive topics.
- regularly signpost pupils to sources of support both within and beyond school.
- Correct scientific terminology for private body parts is used within RSE lessons. In line with The Department of Education expectations for statutory Health Education, pupils are taught terminology such as; vulva vagina, penis, scrotum, testicles and nipples. This supports healthy understanding of the body, reduces stigma and ensures pupils have the language and confidence to communicate concerns or report abuse.

Answering pupils' questions

When responding to pupils' questions, our priority is to support and guide them appropriately. We recognise that unanswered questions may lead pupils to seek information from unreliable or inappropriate sources, including online.

Pupils may sometimes ask questions that go beyond the curriculum or content taught in school, including topics from which they have been withdrawn. In such cases, staff may direct pupils to discuss these questions with their parent or carer where appropriate. Staff will:

- reassure pupils that all questions are valid and foster a non-judgemental environment where sensitive topics can be discussed safely
- Where appropriate, explore pupils' existing understanding to establish an appropriate starting point for responses
- Provide opportunities for anonymous questions, for example through a question box, allowing staff time to prepare considered and appropriate responses
- Recognise that questions do not need to be answered immediately and may be revisited later, including after consultation with the Personal Development Lead.
- Ensure that responses remain age-appropriate and avoid providing unnecessary or overly detailed information.
- Share themes and trends in pupil questions with the Personal Development Lead to support ongoing curriculum development
- Consider whether a question is inappropriate for the whole class, overly explicit, or raises safeguarding concerns. In such cases, the question will be

acknowledged and followed up individually. Safeguarding procedures will be followed where necessary

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

As RSE covers a range of sensitive topics teachers are aware that a disclosure may be made during or after a lesson. Pupils understand where they can report any concerns and seek help.

If a child makes a disclosure, or their contribution raises a safeguarding concern, they will be supported sensitively. The disclosure will be recorded and responded to in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance and the school safeguarding policy. Pupils will be notified beforehand through the ground rules how confidentiality will be handled, and what might happen if they choose to make a report. Where external agencies deliver lessons, we agree in advance how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by them.

5. Curriculum Content

Our curriculum provision aims to be responsive and agile to meet the needs of our pupils. We may at times include new content to address any new safeguarding needs that may arise. We will inform parents in advance and share any relevant materials with parents on request.

The table below provides a whole – school overview of the key themes covered across the academic year within our PSHE lessons. These themes are carefully sequenced to ensure progression in knowledge and skills as pupils move through the school.

More detailed information about the specific content taught in each year group can be found on the individual class curriculum pages on the school website. If you require any further information or have any questions about the curriculum, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Term	Health and Wellbeing	RSE	Living in the Wider World
Autumn 1	Healthy Eating	Relationships	Community and belonging
Autumn 2	General Wellbeing and Mental Wellbeing	Online Safety	British Values <i>The Rule of Law, Democracy and Black History</i>
Spring 1	Health protection and prevention and/or understanding the healthcare system	Being Safe <i>All about me</i>	Personal safety <i>Risk and influence</i>
Spring 2	Drugs, alcohol, tobacco and vaping	Developing bodies and/or intimate sexual relationships	Sustainability
Summer 1	Physical health and fitness	Being safe <i>The wider world</i>	Wellbeing Online
Summer 2	Personal safety <i>Environments and hazards</i>	Relationships	British Values <i>Individual liberty, Mutual Respect and Tolerance</i>

6. Equality:

Our school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires schools to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relationships between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The protected characteristics are; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation. We recognise that all pupils are entitled to high-quality, inclusive RSE. Our curriculum is accessible to all and reflects the diversity of our school community wider society ensuring that pupils can see themselves represented appropriately and respectfully,

All pupils are taught about physical and emotional changes during puberty, in a way that is inclusive and ensures they have the knowledge they need to understand their own development and that of others. We challenge gender stereotypes and support pupils to recognise and question limiting expectations so that all can achieve their full potential.

We recognise that children come from a wide range of family structures. Our teaching reflects this diversity, including (but not limited to): single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents or other relatives, adoptive and foster families, and kinship care arrangements. We emphasise that stable, caring relationships are at the heart of family life.

Our approach to RSE takes account of the needs of all pupils, including:

- **Pupils of different genders:** We ensure that RSE is inclusive and engaging for all pupils, challenging sexism, sexualised behaviour and sexist bullying where it occurs.
- **Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND):** We recognise that some pupils may require adapted teaching approaches. We will assess individual needs and ensure that RSE is accessible, appropriately adapted and supported.
- **Pupils from different cultural and religious backgrounds:** We respect a wide range of beliefs and values. We will engage sensitively with pupils and families, while ensuring that all statutory content is taught and that teaching supports pupils' safety, wellbeing and rights.
- **LGBTQ+ inclusion:** Our RSE curriculum includes appropriate, factual and inclusive content about sexual orientation and gender identity. We acknowledge that some pupils may identify as LGBTQ+, or have family members who do. We promote a culture of respect and inclusion, and we actively challenge homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying and language.

Throughout our RSE provision, we ensure that no pupil is excluded or disadvantaged, and that all teaching is underpinned by the principles of equality, respect and safeguarding.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Governors are responsible to make sure 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/carers on the subject content, teaching materials and external providers, and on the right to request that their child is withdrawn from sex education.

Headteacher is responsible to make sure that:

- the RSE policy is up to date, statutory requirements are met and provision aligns with safeguarding and curriculum expectations.
- they inform and engage parents/carers, manage withdrawal requests, promote inclusivity and report to governors on RSE effectiveness
- the Personal Development Lead is able to carry out their duties, working alongside the SLT and provide staff with relevant training and resources as required to support the deliver of the RSE curriculum at SSSC.

Personal Development Faculty Lead is responsible to make sure that:

- there is a progressive spiral RSE curriculum for all pupils in school and a consistent approach to quality teaching in RSE.
- the development and delivery of effective PSHE across the school is up to date with latest developments in the subject including links to other areas such as safeguarding, equality and life skills.
- they work closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the subjects complement and do not duplicate content covered in national curriculum subjects such as careers, science, computing and PE.
- staff are trained to develop a secure knowledge and understanding of the RSE curriculum, the language used, and the themes covered in each year group.
- pupils report that their RSE provision is helping them at the right time in their daily lives and meets the evolving societal needs in which they find themselves.
- RSE is monitored and evaluated in line with all other subjects in the school.
- RSE support for parents/carers is maintained.
- Where external visitors contribute to the RSE provision in school via workshops or assemblies, that their approach and content is age-appropriate and in line with our RSE and safeguarding policies. At SSSC this may include

sessions from the Fire Service, Police Community Support Officers and/or Public Health nurses.

Teachers are responsible to make sure that:

- They plan, deliver and assess RSE lessons in line with the whole school overview and long-term plan for their year group.
- They monitor pupil progress in RSE and adapt lessons to meet the needs of our pupils.
- They manage sensitive discussions appropriately and responding to pupils' questions in line with school guidance.
- Pupils requiring targeted or adapted RSE are identified and supported.
- They engage with the Personal Development Lead on staff development (whole school and/or individual as identified).
- They promote equality, diversity and respect in all aspects of RSE teaching.
- They remain aware of the RSE Policy, and their responsibilities within this.

Parents/Carers are responsible for:

- Supporting the school in delivering RSE and reinforcing key messages at home.
- Engaging with the school's RSE policy and curriculum through consultation and communication opportunities.
- Communicating with the school if they have any questions or concerns about RSE provision.
- Understanding their rights in relation to withdrawal from non-statutory elements of sex education (where applicable)

Pupils are responsible for:

- Engaging in RSE lessons in a respectful and responsible manner.
- Listening to others' views and contributing thoughtfully to discussions.
- Contributing and following the school's RSE Working agreement (Appendix 1. this has been updated in collaboration with School Council)
- Seeking support from a trusted adult in school/home if they have concerns or questions.

External providers

Our lessons are mostly taught by class teachers; however, some lessons may be taught by the local PCSO, fire service, school nurses etc. Where this happens, the class teacher and, where appropriate, Personal Development Lead will liaise with the provider to ensure that their approach and content is age-appropriate and in line with our RSE and safeguarding policies.

8. Engaging with Parents and Carers

We believe that the teaching of RSE is a critical joint venture between school and home. By listening and responding to the views of pupils and parents/carers, we aim to ensure that RSE meets our pupils' needs and that topics are taught at the right time to keep our children healthy and safe, to support them to build positive relationships and to avoid harms before they occur.

We are committed to supporting our parents and carers to engage with their child's RSE.

We do this by:

- Consulting parents and carers on RSE policy development
- Providing an overview of the RSE curriculum on our website
- Supporting parents and carers, as appropriate, to talk to their child about sex education and how to link this with what is being taught in school.
- Sharing relevant information on the school website and by e-mail e.g. links to useful information.

Most of this information is available on our dedicated PSHE and RSE page on our website: <https://www.swanwicksportscollege.co.uk>

We aim to work in active partnership with parents/carers, value their views and keep them informed about our RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any concerns about the RSE provision, we will take time to address their concerns and allay any fears they may have.

For pupils at Primary age:

If you do not want your child to take part in some or all of the lessons on Sex Education, you can ask that they are withdrawn. At primary level the Headteacher will grant this request. Please note that the Science curriculum also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.

If there are elements of the curriculum you wish to request to withdraw your child, please contact the school and discuss this with their Form Tutor and you may then be given a 'Rights to Withdraw' form to complete.

For pupils at Secondary age:

If you do not want your child to take part in some or all of the Sex Education lessons delivered at secondary, you can ask that they are withdrawn. The Headteacher will consider this request and discuss it with parents/carers, and will grant this in all but exceptional circumstances, up until three school terms before your child turns 16. At this age, your child can choose to receive Sex Education if they would like to, and the school should arrange for your child to receive this teaching in one of those three terms (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

If parents/carers decide to withdraw their child, we shall work with them and their child to explore possible alternative provision and will work to ensure the safety of that child.

9. Quality Assurance

Within SSSC the Lead of the Personal Development Faculty has responsibility for the quality assurance of the PSHE, RSE and Life Skills curriculum, working in close partnership with the Senior Leadership Team.

The Faculty Lead ensures that the curriculum is carefully planned, sequenced and mapped to meet the statutory requirements, appropriate and reflects the needs of pupils within our school context. The curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects current safeguarding priorities, local context and emerging issues.

A range of quality assurance processes are in place to maintain high standards of teaching and learning, including:

- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Book looks
- Moderation opportunities to ensure consistency of delivery across staff
- Pupil voice and feedback
- Staff feedback and evaluation

All staff delivering RSE receive appropriate training and have access to a range of resources to ensure they are confident, competent and up to date with statutory guidance and safeguarding expectations. The school is committed to providing ongoing, high-quality professional development to ensure consistency and high standards across all teaching.

New staff receive a copy of the RSE policy as part of the induction process and are supported to understand their responsibilities in delivering the curriculum effectively.

10. Policy Process and monitoring

This policy has been produced following consultation with governors, staff, parents/carers and pupils at SSSC. It has been informed by national research, current legislation, national and local safeguarding priorities, local data and context, and the identified needs of pupils.

This policy is approved by the Headteacher and the governing body.

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis; however, it will also be reviewed as required in response to changes in statutory guidance, curriculum content, or safeguarding priorities. Any review will include appropriate consultation with parents/carers and other stakeholders.

At present this policy is under consultation until 17th July 2026 to reflect updates in legislation and changes to our curriculum for pupils at SSSC.

This document is freely available to the entire school community and is published on our school website.

11. Links to other policies

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Behaviour and Attitudes to Learning policy
- Equality policy
- SEND policy
- Drugs Policy
- Anti-bullying policy

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12. Appendix

Working agreement made in collaboration with School Council.

