

‘Live Life in all its Fullness’ John 10:10



**Heartwood Church of England VC Primary and
Nursery School**

Life Skills (RSHE) Policy

Agreed by the Governing Board: September 2026

Heartwood Vision

Hearts and minds grow stronger as we learn every day,
Each one of us flourishes in our own unique way.
At Heartwood, Christian values guide us in all that we pursue,
Respect, responsibility and compassion shine in all we say and do.
Through courage and friendship, we serve and we care,
We love to learn, dream big and give our best everywhere.
Opportunities enable us to achieve and succeed,
Our confidence grows as we speak with purpose and lead.
Determined to make a difference, to live life in all its fullness.



RSHE is underpinned by a clear set of embedded values and principles that complement the school ethos and permeate through the teaching practice, resources and classroom management of RSHE lessons.

Our school values are:

Friendship
Compassion
Service
Courage
Responsibility
Respect

Definitions (What we mean by RSHE)

It is important that our school community understands the different parts of our curriculum:

- **Relationships Education (Compulsory):** This focuses on helping children build positive relationships. They learn about kindness, respect, friendships, families, and understanding personal boundaries.
- **Health Education (Compulsory):** This helps children learn how to look after their physical and mental health, make safe choices, and develop healthy habits.
- **Sex Education (Non-Compulsory in Primary):** At Heartwood, we define this as learning about how a baby is conceived and born. This goes beyond what is taught in the National Curriculum for Science.

Aims and Rationale (Why we teach this)

At Heartwood CE VC Primary and Nursery School, we aim to provide a high-quality RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education) curriculum that supports all pupils to stay safe, healthy and prepared for life, both now and in the future.

Our RSHE curriculum is:

- age-appropriate and developmentally informed
- factually accurate, balanced and delivered with sensitivity
- responsive to pupils' needs, experiences and context
- aligned with current safeguarding priorities, including online safety and risks within and beyond the school environment

Through RSHE, pupils develop the knowledge, skills and values they need to:

- build positive, respectful relationships
- understand and manage their physical and mental wellbeing
- recognise and respond to risk
- make informed and responsible decisions

Our commitment to pupils' personal development, health and wellbeing is rooted in our school vision and Christian ethos. We promote values such as kindness, respect and responsibility across all areas of school life.

The curriculum is informed by current statutory guidance from the Department for Education and is regularly reviewed to reflect the evolving needs of children growing up in today's society, including the opportunities and challenges of an increasingly digital world.

Our Life Skills Curriculum

RSHE is part of our wider **Life Skills curriculum**, which helps children develop the knowledge and skills they need for everyday life.

Life skills is taught through a spiral curriculum, enabling pupils to revisit and build on key concepts over time. The curriculum follows four core strands:

- Relationships
- Health and wellbeing
- Living in the wider world
- Online safety

Pupils take part in at least one discrete Life Skills session each week, taught by their class teacher. Lessons are delivered using a wide range of engaging approaches, including drama, stories, videos, debate, discussion, circle time and high-quality texts. Planning is informed by guidance and resources from the PSHE Association and is further enriched

through materials from Pol-Ed, the UK Council for Internet Safety and the NSPCC. This learning is revisited regularly so children can build their understanding over time.

Life Skills learning also takes place beyond timetabled lessons and is embedded throughout the wider curriculum and the school's 'hidden curriculum'. Children develop these skills during break times, in PE, history and other subjects, when moving around the school, learning to play and work alongside others, and when developing emotional regulation. Teaching is responsive to real-life situations, whether arising between friends, within school, or in response to events in the wider world. Opportunities are built into the timetable to respond to current events and emerging issues, supporting pupils' contextual understanding.

Planning and delivery are adapted to reflect cohort needs, current issues, and the rapidly changing world. All pupils, including those with SEND and diverse backgrounds, are supported to access the curriculum effectively, ensuring they are well prepared for the next stage of education and life in modern Britain. Parents and carers are informed in advance of any significant changes to the programme.

Statutory requirements and Sex Education

In line with the Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019:

- Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory in primary schools
- Sex education is not compulsory

At Heartwood, sex education:

- is delivered in a carefully planned, age-appropriate and sensitive manner
- reflects the importance of family life and moral considerations
- is adapted to pupils' developmental stage, prior knowledge and safeguarding needs
- it is taught only in Year 6, in the summer term

Before these lessons:

- parents and carers are invited to view the materials
- there is an opportunity to ask questions and discuss concerns

Teaching is factual and balanced, ensuring pupils understand key biological knowledge without presenting contested views as fact. Pupils are encouraged to develop their own values while showing respect for others. We always aim to respect family values and beliefs, while ensuring children receive clear and accurate information.

Right to withdraw from Sex Education

- Relationships and Health Education are compulsory and cannot be withdrawn from
- Parents can request to withdraw their child from Sex Education (Year 6 only)

If you are considering this:

- please speak to the headteacher
- we will explain what is taught and why it is important
- we will always respect your decision

Children who are withdrawn will be given appropriate alternative learning.

Working with parents and carers

We believe parents and carers are the most important educators of their children.

We aim to work in close partnership by:

- sharing what will be taught each half term
- explaining key vocabulary
- welcoming questions and conversations

We also:

- invite feedback through our annual consultation
- operate an open-door approach for discussions
- inform parents about any significant changes

We are committed to making our curriculum inclusive and respectful of all families in our community.

Creating a safe environment for learning

We aim to create a classroom environment where children:

- feel safe to ask questions
- understand that all questions are treated respectfully
- know the limits of confidentiality

There will always be sensitive and controversial issues within the subjects of RSHE. These may be a matter of age and stage appropriateness or contrasting personal beliefs including those originating from faith perspectives and culture. We believe that children are best educated and protected from harm when they are provided with a safe and supportive space to discuss issues openly within the framework of a class working agreement.

Children can:

- ask questions openly
- use an anonymous question box ("Ask-it basket") if they prefer

Teachers:

- answer questions in an age-appropriate way
- may follow up later if needed
- will always prioritise safeguarding
- Signpost pupils to information relevant to the topic being taught to ensure safe sources of information, advice and guidance are provided.

If a child shares something that raises concern, staff will follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Equality and inclusion

We are committed to creating a school where:

- everyone feels valued and respected
- differences are understood and celebrated
- discrimination is challenged

Our teaching:

- promotes equality for all, including gender and LGBT+ equality
- challenges stereotypes and harmful behaviours
- is adapted to meet the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND

Assessment

Pupils' learning will be assessed throughout and at the end of every topic to ensure that pupils are making sufficient progress to build on prior teaching and learning and that teaching strategies and resources remain relevant and effective. Assessment activities will be implicit, forming part of a normal teaching activity to ensure that pupils do not feel under pressure and will include self-assessment tasks that will confirm pupils understanding of the topics and knowledge retention and application. The evaluation of teaching and learning assessments will be shared with pupils and parents as appropriate. Teachers will use and adapt the PSHE Association assessment materials to inform their assessment and planning.

Policy availability

Stakeholders can be informed about the policy through RSHE consultation events and accessing a copy from the school website. Should a hard-copy of the document be required, the school will be happy to provide this upon request and will also work with any stakeholders that require the policy in an alternative format to meet their individual needs, ensuring equitable accessibility for all. The policy can be obtained in an alternative format by contacting office@heartwood.norfolk.sch.uk

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in line with the statutory guidance for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education issued by the Department for Education, including the updated guidance published in 2025. It reflects the requirements of the Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 and will be fully implemented in line with national expectations from September 2026.

Governors and senior leaders aim to ensure the policy meets the needs of pupils and parents and reflects the context of Heartwood CE VC Primary and Nursery School. We work in partnership with parents and carers, promoting transparency and providing opportunities for consultation. Parents retain the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory elements of sex education, in line with statutory guidance.

The curriculum is delivered as part of a whole-school approach to safeguarding and wellbeing, supported by appropriate staff training and professional judgement. Content is carefully sequenced and adapted to be age-appropriate, recognising that pupils' needs may vary over time.

This policy is reviewed annually to ensure it remains compliant with statutory requirements and responsive to the needs of the school community.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Life Skills Long Term Plan

Online Safety Relationships Health and well-being Living in the wider world Anti-bullying Anti-Racism Water Safety PANTS

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y1 & R	Emotions  The Colour Monster/ Ruby's Worry	How can I be a germ buster?  https://www.pol-ed.co.uk/lessons/year-groups/early-years/subjects/wellbeing	Friendships and Bullying  https://pshe-association.org.uk/lesson-plans/friendship-and-bullying	How does exercise and food help me?  https://www.pol-ed.co.uk/lessons/year-groups/early-years/subjects/wellbeing	Understanding the law  https://www.pol-ed.co.uk/lessons/year-groups/early-years/subjects/understanding-the-law	Keeping Safe  https://www.pol-ed.co.uk/lessons/year-groups/early-years/subjects/keeping-safe
	PANTS	Anti-bullying	PANTS	Anti-racism	PANTS	Water Safety
		Online bullying	Online relationships	Health, wellbeing & lifestyle	Self-image and identity	Online reputation

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y1	What is the same and different about us? 	Who is special to us? 	What helps us stay healthy? 	What can we do with money? 	Who helps to keep us safe? 	How can we look after each other and the world? 
	Self-image and identity	Anti-bullying	Health, wellbeing & lifestyle	Anti-racism	Online bullying	Water safety
		Online relationships		PANTS		Online reputation
Y2	What makes a good friend? 	What is bullying? 	What jobs do people do? 	What helps us to stay safe? 	What helps us grow and stay healthy? 	How do we recognise our feelings? 
	Online relationships	Anti-bullying	PANTS	Anti-racism	Health, wellbeing & lifestyle	Water Safety
		Online Bullying		Online reputation		Self-image and identity

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y3	How can we be a good friend? 	What keeps us safe? 	What are families like? 	What makes a community? 	Why should we eat well and look after our teeth? 	Why should we keep active and sleep well? 
	Online relationships	Anti-bullying	Self-image and identity	Anti-racism	PANTS	Water Safety
		Online bullying		Online reputation		Health, Wellbeing & Lifestyle
Y4	What strengths, skills and interests do we have? 	How will we grow and change? 	How can we manage our feelings? 	How do we treat each other with respect? 	How can our choices make a difference to others and the environment? 	How can we manage risk in different places? 
	Self image and identity	Anti-bullying	Online bullying	Anti-racism	PANTS	Water Safety
		Health, wellbeing & lifestyle		Online relationships		Online reputation

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Y5	What makes up a person's identity? 	What decisions can people make with money? 	How can we help in an accident or emergency? 	How can friends communicate safely? 	How can drugs common to everyday life affect health? 	What jobs would we like? 
	Self image and identity	Anti-bullying	PANTS	Anti-racism	Health, wellbeing & lifestyle	Water Safety
		Online bullying		Online relationships		Online reputation
Y6	How can we keep healthy as we grow? 		How can the media influence people? 	What will change as we become more independent? How do friendships change as we grow? 		
	Health, wellbeing & lifestyle	PANTS	Online bullying	Self image and identity	Online relationships	Online reputation
		Anti-bullying		Anti-Racism		Water Safety