Relationships and Sex Education Policy

ODBST Level 1 Statutory Policy:	**ALL** Schools require this policy with **no changes** allowed to core text. No changes are necessary to personalise this with school name and branding, as this is a Trust level policy for use, without change, by all schools, **except** where a school contact is required as identified in the content of the policy. LGBs will **note** adoption in LGB meetings. Review will take place at Trust level, and schools will be notified of updates and review dates as necessary.
Other related ODBST policies and procedures:	ODBST Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy ODBST Curriculum Policy
Committee responsible:	SEC
Approved by:	SEC
Date Approved:	
Review Date:	

1. Aims

The aims of the ODBST relationships and sex education (RSE) are to:

- provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place;
- prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene;
- help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy;
- create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships;
- teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies;
- for pupils to know what safe and healthy relationships look like in order for pupils to keep themselves safe and healthy.

This policy has been reviewed to ensure compliance with statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance effective from September 2026.

2. Statutory Requirements

All academies must provide relationships education to all pupils under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

ODBST schools are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is based on the National Curriculum, including requirements to teach science. This should include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

In teaching RSHE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to the Department for Education's 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education' statutory guidance (July 2025), effective from September 2026, issued under section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

ODBST schools teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy Development

The ODBST are consulting with parents, staff and pupils as part of our process for making changes to this RSHE policy. The consultation period will run from 10/07/26 until 31/08/26

The ODBST has determined the core policy and each school will ensure that:

- the Headteacher and RSE lead has considered all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance and has consulted with the ODBST Director of Education
- staff consultation – all school staff are given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties are invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE learning in school and use this to inform the relevant scheme adopted
- ratification – once amendments are made, an appropriate scheme will be chosen and shared with governors. Any suggested amendments to the core policy will be sent to the ODBST via the school Headteacher and considered by the Director of Education and the ODBST Trustees.

4. Definition

Trustees of the ODBST expect all of our Key Stage 2 settings to include sex education in addition to what is covered in the core science curriculum.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

The RSE curriculum for Thomas Harding Junior School is set out in Appendix 1. This may be adapted and parents/carers will always be informed when significant changes are made to the content that is being covered. Parents and carers are entitled to view all Relationships and Sex Education teaching materials on request and will be given opportunities to ask questions about them. The arrangements for doing this are that each Summer Term, parents are informed in advance of the relevant lessons to be delivered and are offered the opportunity to view the teaching materials in school. The slides for the lessons are also sent to parents and carers in advance.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

As part of RSHE, pupils are taught about online risks including artificial intelligence (AI) generated content, deepfakes, sextortion, fake online identities and other forms of online exploitation, in an age-appropriate way.

Primary school sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

Secondary school sex education will focus on:

- healthy, respectful and safe intimate relationships, including consent and communication;
- sexual health and reproductive choices, including contraception, pregnancy options and STI/HIV prevention;
- understanding the law and recognising abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment and sexual violence;
- online risks, including pornography, coercive control, harmful online cultures and AI-generated content;
- accessing appropriate help, advice and support.

In 16–19 provision, RSHE builds on earlier learning and supports pupils to make informed, safe and responsible decisions as they prepare for adult life.

ODBST schools also deliver the required health education, covering physical health, mental wellbeing, puberty, drugs and alcohol, personal safety and first aid, taught progressively through PSHE. At secondary, sensitive topics such as eating disorders, self-harm and suicide prevention are addressed using appropriately trained staff and evidence-based materials.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

6. Delivery of RSHE

RSE-related topics are taught within our PSHE curriculum

We consider the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and other vulnerabilities, through our holistic inclusive approach.

Primary sex education is taught in Year 6 in one session. This is the only lesson that parents can withdraw their child from. All other RSE lessons are within the Science and safeguarding curriculum.

Where a pupil has been withdrawn from sex education, teachers will respond to any questions they raise in a factual, age-appropriate way without delivering the withdrawn content.

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Teaching about sex, gender and protected characteristics is factual, lawful and balanced. Pupils are taught the facts and the law about biological sex and gender reassignment, including distinct legal rights. Beyond these facts, schools will not teach contested views as settled fact — for example, schools will not teach as fact that all people have a gender identity.

RSHE is taught in a way that is appropriate having regard to the age, development and religious background of pupils, and which respects faith perspectives while meeting statutory requirements.

Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

For more information about our RSHE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

RSHE also supports pupils to recognise and understand sexual harassment and sexual violence, including peer-on-peer abuse, and to know that such behaviour is unacceptable, never the victim's fault, and should be reported. Teaching about consent emphasises kindness, care, respect and awareness of power imbalance, and not consent alone.

7. Inclusivity

ODBST schools will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them;
- is sensitive to all pupils' experiences;
- during lessons, makes pupils feel safe and supported and able to ask the questions that they want to ask;
- challenges harmful attitudes and behaviours, including sexism and misogyny.

ODBST schools will ensure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:

- A whole-class setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats

We know that pupils with SEND are more likely to be subject to abuse and to relationship difficulties and that understanding some of the key concepts around RSHE can sometimes be more challenging for pupils with SEND. ODBST schools will ensure that the materials used to support the RSE learning for pupils with SEND are suitably adapted and meet individual need.

8. Use of resources

ODBST schools will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSHE guidance;
- would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings;
- are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils;
- are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics;
- fit into our curriculum plan;
- are from credible sources;
- are compatible with effective teaching approaches;
- are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress.

Parents and carers are entitled to view all Relationships and Sex Education teaching materials on request and will be given opportunities to ask questions about them.

8.1 Use of external organisations and resources

Many ODBST schools use external agencies and commercially produced resources to support RSHE delivery. The school remains responsible for all content delivered to pupils, including ensuring it does not undermine fundamental British values.

Before working with any external agency, schools will check the credentials of the provider, view all materials and lesson plans in advance, and ensure content is age-appropriate, balanced, and consistent with this policy. All materials used by external providers will be available to parents on request.

ODBST will not work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions, nor use materials produced by such agencies even if the material itself is not extreme.

9. Roles and Responsibilities

9.1 The ODBST Trustees and Local Governing Body

The ODBST Trustees have approved the RSHE policy and the Local Governing Body and ODBST Director of Education will hold the Headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

9.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSHE (see section 9).

9.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- delivering RSE in a sensitive way;
- modelling positive attitudes to RSE;
- monitoring progress;

- responding to the needs of individual pupils;
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSHE.

All teaching staff are expected to deliver RSHE lessons and do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

9.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

10 Parent/carer right to withdraw

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSHE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents before granting it. In secondary schools, the Headteacher may decline a request in exceptional circumstances, such as safeguarding concerns.

Alternative school work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

From three terms before their 16th birthday, a pupil may choose to receive sex education even if they have previously been withdrawn at the request of their parent or carer. Secondary schools will ensure pupils are made aware of this right.

11. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The Headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Mrs Hussain, PSHE Lead, through:

Planning and work scrutiny, pupil voice and learning walks.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Appendix 1

Overview	Lesson Title	Learning Objectives	Endpoints	Vocabulary
Year 5 **Core Theme 1:** **Health and Wellbeing** • how their body will, and emotions may, change as they approach and move through puberty • to recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them **Core Theme 2: Relationships** • to feel confident to raise their own concerns, to recognise and care about other people's feelings **Science Attainment Targets** • describe the changes as humans develop to old age	**Talking about Puberty**	To explore the emotional and physical changes occurring in puberty	• Explain the main physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty • Ask questions about puberty with confidence	**Year 3** Puberty Physical changes Emotional changes Moods Menstruation Periods Tampons Sanitary towels Wet dreams Semen Erection Sweat Breasts Spots Pubic hair Facial hair Underarm hair
	Male and Female Changes	To understand male and female puberty changes in more detail	• Understand how puberty affects the reproductive organs • Describe how to manage physical and emotional changes	
	Puberty and Hygiene	To explore the impact of puberty on the body & the importance of hygiene	• To explore ways to get support during puberty • Explain how to keep clean during puberty • Explain how emotions change during puberty Know how to get support and help during puberty	
Overview	**Lesson Title**	**Learning Objectives**	**Endpoints**	**Vocabulary**
Year 6 **Core Theme 1:** **Health and Wellbeing** how their body will, and emotions may, change as they approach and move through puberty • about human reproduction	**Growing and Changing**	To consider puberty and reproduction	• Describe how and why the body changes during puberty in preparation for reproduction • Talk about puberty and reproduction with confidence	**Year 6** Womb Sperm Egg Conception Fertilisation
• the importance of protecting personal information, including passwords, addresses and the distribution of images of themselves and others **Science Attainment Targets** o be aware of different types of relationship, including those between friends and families, civil partnerships and marriage • to recognise what constitutes positive healthy relationships and develop the skills to form them	**What is puberty?**	Consider physical & emotional behaviour in relationships	• Discuss different types of adult relationships with confidence Know what form of touching is appropriate	Pregnancy Sexual intercourse Twins Fostering Adoption Relationship Friendship Love Consent Intimacy Communication Personal/private information Internet saefty
	Puberty changes and reproduction.	To explore the process of conception and pregnancy	• Describe the decisions that have to be made before having a baby Know some basic facts about pregnancy and conception	
	Communicating in Relationships	To explore positive and negative ways of communicating in a relationship	• To have considered when it is appropriate to share personal/private information in a relationship • To know how and where to get support if an online relationship goes wrong	

Appendix 2- Where the school choses to teach sex education- by the end of primary school pupils should know

Make sure boys and girls are prepared for the changes that adolescence bring (Puberty). This may include:	Draw on knowledge of the human life cycle set out in science lessons to explain how a baby is conceived and born. This may include:
Key facts about puberty (particularly from the age of 9-11 including physical and emotional changes including: • Identify the physical, emotional and behavioural changes that occur during puberty for boys and girls; • Understand the puberty is individual and can occur at any time between 8-17; • Understand that the body changes at puberty are a preparation for sexual maturity; • Name the male and female sex cells and reproductive organs.	Pupils learn about human reproduction in the context of the human life cycle; • Understand that sexuality is expressed in a variety of different ways between consenting adults; • Understand the similarities and differences between friendships and intimate relationships; • Describe how babies are made and grow (conception and pregnancy), where it occurs and how long it takes; • Identify some of the roles, responsibilities, skills and qualities needed to be a parent/carer. Understand the needs of a baby and how parents/carers meet those needs; • Recognise that both men and women can take on these roles and responsibilities