RELATIONSHIP & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Prior Park College

Policy Owner Assistant Head, Wellbeing	**Applies to** Prior Park College (PPC)	**Superseded documents** RSE Policy v5
Associated documents PSHE Handbook Policy Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy Curriculum Policy Safeguarding Policy SEND Policy Anti-Bullying Policy E-Safety Policy Gender Questioning Policy	**Review frequency** Every year (unless the legislation/regulations update before this time) **Implementation date** 20 November 2026	**Legal Framework** Equality Act 2010 KCSIE 2026 Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education July 2025 (for implementation September 2026) Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026 Crime and Policing Act 2026 Online Safety Act 2023

This policy is reviewed annually, or more regularly as required, prior to approval by Trustees, where applicable.

Last reviewed by:	Assistant Head, Wellbeing (Mr D Sackett), Head of PSHE (Miss B Main) and Head of Compliance (Miss E Wickham)
Date last reviewed:	October 2026
Approved by Trustees:	NA Approved by Head of Compliance
Date last approved:	19 November 2026
Date for next approval:	November 2027

1. Introduction

Prior Park Schools (PPS) is a family of Christian schools based in Bath and Gibraltar. Prior Park College (PPC) and Prior Park Paragon (PPP) are incorporated in England as Prior Park Educational Trust Ltd. Prior Park Gibraltar (PPG), is incorporated in Gibraltar as Prior Park School Ltd. Both are companies limited by guarantee and registered charities.

The Prior Park Schools mission, underpinned by shared values, is to steward a thriving family of communities with love for the young people they serve at their heart. These vibrant communities cultivate creativity, foster integrity, and transform lives.

Prior Park Schools Values:

Curiosity – Generosity – Courage

This policy gives details of the School's policies, procedures and teaching regarding Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). This policy is available on the School website and available at the request of parents / carers and guardians.

This policy has been written in accordance with statutory guidance from the DfE issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. It is written in accordance with guidance laid out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026), Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (July 2025 for implementation September 2026).

This policy is reviewed and updated annually by the Assistant Head Wellbeing, and it is developed with consultation of parents, staff and students. The policy is approved by the SLT and Board of Trustees.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- PSHE Handbook Policy
- Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity Policy
- Curriculum Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Gender Questioning Policy

2. Policy Aims and Scope

In line with the School's aims and objectives, the RSE curriculum is designed to help students' personal, moral and social development, which incorporates the concept of citizenship.

The School understands that students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their relationships and sexual behaviour and to better understand one another. Students will learn about respect for themselves and others when forming relationships and will leave the School with a strong understanding of consent and the conversations around it.

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education regulations 2019, updated 2025, for implementation Sept 2026, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make relationships and sex education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. RSE also supports the delivery of the requirement of Section 1 of the Education Reform Act (1988) that the school curriculum should be one which: *'promotes moral, cultural, mental and physical development of the students at the school and of society; and prepares such students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life'*.

The importance of teaching young people about consent is central to learning about healthy, equal and safe relationships and choices.

In November 2013, the Office of the Children's Commissioner (OCC) completed an inquiry into child sexual exploitation (CSE) which has raised awareness of the prevalence of this issue and the urgent need to tackle it. The OCC inquiry showed that young people do not always recognise non-consensual sexual situations including rape. The inquiry confirmed the importance of good quality RSE, which addresses gender-based and power inequalities, how these can lead to coercion and sexual violence, and the need for this to be taught in all schools as part of universal prevention.

The School is aware that for many young people the distinction between the online and other aspects of life is less marked than for some adults. Young people operate very freely in the online world and by secondary school age some are likely to be living a substantial proportion of their life online. Effective education in RSE extends into the online and digital world and this is addressed through the RSE curriculum.

The school actively promotes the Fundamental British Values. Discriminatory or extremist opinions are challenged as a matter of routine.

The School encourages respect for all people, paying particular regard to the Equality Act 2010. The School is aware of its responsibilities with regard to protected characteristics and actively champions diversity and promotes inclusion.

The School recognises its responsibility to make RSE accessible and differentiated for SEND students.

The School draws students from a wide variety of religious and cultural backgrounds. It is important, therefore, that we acknowledge, and are sensitive to, differing attitudes.

This policy is written in consultation with Staff, Trustees, Students and their Parents/Guardians.

Prior Park College recognises that parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children in matters relating to relationships, values and sexual health.

The School is committed to working in partnership with families and ensuring transparency regarding the content of the RSE curriculum.
Parents and guardians may:

- request information about the RSE curriculum taught in each year group;
- view curriculum overviews and representative teaching materials;
- discuss any aspect of the programme with the Assistant Head Wellbeing or PSHE Coordinator;
- receive notification of significant changes to curriculum content.

The School recognises that students may encounter differing views at home, in the community and online. RSE seeks to equip students with the skills to consider differing perspectives respectfully whilst understanding the law, safeguarding expectations and their rights and responsibilities.

3. Relationship and Sex Education

It is vital that at Prior Park College we prepare all of our students for life in modern Britain. Our school, along with our parents and guardians, has a critical role to play in helping to shape rounded, resilient young people that can face the challenges of the modern world with confidence. PPC's approach seeks to ensure that all our young people are able to discuss some of life's most sensitive issues, understand the importance of their own mental health and others, whilst building resilience and other vital life skills.

a. Intention

Good PSHE education which delivers age-appropriate Relationship and Sex education (RSE) will provide our young people with both the knowledge and skills to manage their lives, stay safe, make the right decisions and thrive as individuals and members of society.

We hope to empower them spiritually and emotionally to consider the impact that such actions will have on their future lives. Good RSE never seeks to promote promiscuity or sexual behaviour but seeks to promote respect, love and understanding as well as to challenge misconceptions.

It is PPC's intention that by the end of Upper 5 (Year 11) all students will have developed knowledge on:

Families	Students should know • 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 e.g. 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships, including friendships	Students should know • the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including 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, age or disability, can cause damage (e.g. 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. • 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. • how misogyny, misandry, sexism, sexual harassment and harmful gender stereotypes can affect individuals, relationships and wider society; • how online communities and influencers may normalise unhealthy or abusive relationship behaviours and how these narratives may be challenged.
Online and media	Students should know • how artificial intelligence, algorithms and online platforms influence the content they see and the decisions they make; • how AI-generated content, manipulated images and deepfakes can be created and used to deceive or exploit people; • the risks associated with sharing images online, including AI-generated sexual imagery; • how to critically evaluate information encountered online and identify misinformation, disinformation and manipulated content; • how some online communities, influencers and social media content may promote unhealthy attitudes towards relationships, sex, gender or personal identity. • the risks associated with AI chatbots and parasocial online relationships

Being safe	Students should know- • 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). • how to recognise and report public sexual harassment; • the law relating to image-based abuse, including the sharing of intimate images without consent; • the nature and risks of sextortion and online sexual exploitation; • that non-fatal strangulation and suffocation are serious forms of abuse and criminal offences; • that virginity testing and hymenoplasty are illegal and harmful practices; • the signs of coercive, controlling and exploitative behaviours in relationships; • that marriage under the age of 18 is illegal in England and Wales.
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	Students should know • 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, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • the facts about reproductive health throughout life, including fertility, pregnancy, miscarriage, menopause and common reproductive health conditions such as endometriosis, polyendocrine metabolic ovarian syndrome (PMOS often referred to as PCOS), and heavy menstrual bleeding; how lifestyle factors can influence fertility and reproductive health; when medical advice should be sought and where support can be accessed. • 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/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.

	• about modern methods of reducing the transmission of HIV, including the role of testing, treatment, Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP); • how to access reliable NHS and local sexual health services; • when and how to seek medical advice regarding sexual and reproductive health concerns.

b. Content

Our RSE programme at Prior Park College is holistic and is taught not only in PSHE lessons, but in Biology, Theology and in other contexts across the curriculum as and when such themes arise. It will also be taught in designated pastoral time for the upper and lower sixth (for example during General Studies and Prior 4 Life). It will also form part of dedicated enhancement events or during specialist lectures and in assemblies and tutor periods.

It will draw upon the statutory government guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education updated 2025.

The main outcomes of the programme delivered through Theology, are:

- To address the needs and concerns of students in the area of sexuality so that they might grow spirituality and morally and recognise that they are loved by God
- To facilitate in the students the development of self-love and self-worth as creatures made in the image and likeness of God
- To develop an understanding of the emotional, moral, spiritual, social and personal aspects of human sexuality
- To enable students to consider critically the values of the modern world with regard to human sexuality
- To impart full knowledge and understanding of the details of puberty and human procreation in their physical as well as emotional, spiritual and moral aspects: to be aware of their attitudes and values and have a sense of responsibility for themselves and others
- To consider issues associated with sexuality such as contraception and abortion; to enable students to understand the Church teaching in this area and to be able to articulate and critically evaluate their own views in the light of such teaching
- To give knowledge of all sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS
- To enable students to discern and make choices in the light of the teaching of the Church
- To enable students to understand Marriage as a sign of God's covenant relationship with us
- To bring about a deeper appreciation of the importance and values of the family life, while appreciating the varied forms the family can take in the modern world
- To be aware of the joys, problems, and difficulties in marriage, such as adultery and divorce
- To consider sexuality and gender.

The main outcome of the programme delivered through Biology, are:

- L3: Cellular biology and reproduction
- L5: Reproduction and Meiosis advantages and disadvantages of sexual reproduction
- U5: Hormones in Human Reproduction Contraceptives

Overview of course content in relation to RSE through the PSHE programme:
The PSHE year is broadly divided into the three strands of Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Issues in the Wider World. Although aspects relating to RSE do appear on term 1 & 3, most of the RSE

specific material is covers in the Lent Term (term 2). When topics recur throughout the spiral curriculum, they are revisited at age-appropriate levels.

Year	What we teach
Lower 3	Term 2- Healthy Relationships, Managing Friendships, Respect, Biology and Emotions of Puberty, The Menstrual Cycle and Communicating with Adults Term 3- Diversity and Protected Characteristics. LGBTQIA+, Racism and Sexism
Form 3	Term 1- Knowing Myself: Values Term 2- Positive Relationship Traits, Rights in Relationships and Emotional Consent, Neurodiversity in relationships and Online Relationships – Safety and challenging content, Reproduction and Fertility. AI, deepfakes and online manipulation Term 3 – Homophobia and Transphobia. Gangs and County Lines
Form 4	Term 1- Relationship and Friendships – Peer Pressure, Friendships and Parties Term 2- Friendship Groups, Pornography, Sexual Consent, STIs, Online Sexual Harassment and Recognising unhealthy relationships. Sextortion, Image-based abuse. Misogyny/misandry online PrEP and PEP, Sexual Health Services Term 3- Gender Based Violence, Forced Marriage and FGM, Prejudice and Discrimination
Lower 5	Term 2- Contraception (This session linked to Health Centre session on using contraception, safe sex, rights and access to contraception via the C-Card scheme), Pregnancy-Miscarriage-Abortion, Consent and first time, Respectful relationships, Pornography, Sexting Term 3- LGTBQIA+, Prejudice and Discrimination –
Upper 5	Term 1- Testicular Cancer Awareness, Sex-Gender-Sexuality. Harmful Influencers Term 2- Impact of Intimacy, Communications in sexual relationships, Consent, Unhealthy Relationships, Online relationship narratives, Respectful debate around contested issues.
Sixth Form	RSE in the Sixth Form is delivered through 2 main forums: 1. Via Prior 4 Life In the Lower 6, students have a fortnightly PSHE lesson. RSE topics included are: • Consent 1 – Consequences and Responsibilities • Consent 2 – Communication Wants and Needs • Modern Families – helping students make informed choices in their future relationships • Something's not right – recognising abusive relationships and where to seek help • AI-generated abuse • Digital consent • Power, influence and misogyny/misandry online 2. Via Sixth Form general studies for both L6 and U6 Each week, the sixth form, as part of their general studies programme, have a lecture from a visiting speaker. From time to time, these speakers reflect on aspects of relationship and sex education. Topics covered are then followed up in tutor time and PSHE sessions. Each student in L6 attends sessions in the Health Centre led by the Lead Nurse. Information includes safe sex, consent, protection from STIs, where to seek help, and advice on healthy sexual relationships. There is an opportunity for questions and follow up if wanted.

The School may make appropriate use of external agencies, healthcare professionals and specialist organisations to enhance elements of the RSE programme.

All external providers are subject to the School's safeguarding procedures and quality assurance processes.

Teaching materials and presentations are reviewed in advance to ensure that they:

- are age-appropriate;
- are factually accurate;
- comply with safeguarding requirements;
- reflect statutory guidance;
- are consistent with the ethos and values of Prior Park College.

The School remains responsible for the content delivered and for ensuring that learning objectives are met.

c. Roles and Responsibilities

It is clear that the best Relationship and Sex education comes from the home, and we encourage parents to actively engage in conversations with their children as and when questions or concerns arise. Parental support and input are an invaluable tool and must not be underestimated. We would also encourage parents to familiarise themselves with the content of our RSE programme to enable them to be prepared for such questions and discussions. For our boarding community house parents and tutors can offer pastoral support for students as and when it is needed.

RSE is delivered by subject teachers, tutors and HsMs as part of the dedicated PSHE curriculum, as well as through assemblies, tutor time and visiting speakers. Inevitably, discussions are likely to arise during Clubs and Societies and in the academic curriculum. Teachers who deliver the curriculum are experienced in managing difficult questions, dealing with student embarrassment and unease, safeguarding and supporting students with SEND and protected characteristics and handling complex conversations.

The School understands that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. When teaching, the starting point is always the applicable law and presenting it in a factual way so that students are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The School aims to inform the students about the full range of perspectives so that, within the law, they are well-equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives in the future, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Sex Education is delivered by experienced teaching professionals. These staff are trained in the delivery of Sex Education, and attend team meetings, led by the Assistant Head Wellbeing and the Coordinator for PSHE, to discuss this policy, the curriculum, monitoring of learning, evaluation and provide peer support to each other.

The delivery is monitored and evaluated by the Assistant Head Wellbeing and the Coordinator for PSHE.

The role of the Health and Wellbeing Centre provides support to individuals on a 1:1 basis on all aspects of RSE. For example, they are able to signpost to local external services available to young people and reinforcing messaging around healthy and safe sexual relationships.

d. Safeguarding

Ground rules for discussion are established at the beginning of each PSHE lesson. Students are encouraged to discuss issues in a general way, avoiding personal examples or identifying individuals. Students are also made aware that information shared during lessons may need to be passed on to the Safeguarding Team if it raises concerns about their safety or the safety of others.

RSE lessons may involve discussion of sensitive and potentially challenging topics. Staff will endeavour to answer students' questions honestly, accurately and in an age-appropriate manner. Professional judgement will be exercised where questions or contributions are not appropriate to the maturity or understanding of the wider class. In such circumstances, issues may be addressed separately with the student rather than discussed in a whole-class setting.

Where a question raises safeguarding concerns, relates to a personal situation, or is otherwise unsuitable for discussion in a class environment, staff may follow up individually with the student. Where appropriate, and with due regard to the student's age and circumstances, parents or guardians may also be involved. Staff may recommend reliable sources of information and support to enable students to explore topics further.

While supporting students to understand and navigate personal issues is an important part of the School's pastoral role, it is essential to distinguish between providing education and providing personal advice. Staff will not provide personal advice on matters such as sexual relationships, contraception or pregnancy, but may signpost students to appropriate sources of support, including parents and guardians, healthcare professionals, safeguarding staff and relevant external services.

When discussing topics that are the subject of wider societal debate, staff will remain impartial whilst ensuring that students understand the relevant law, safeguarding considerations and the protections afforded by the Equality Act 2010.

Staff cannot guarantee confidentiality and will always act in accordance with the School's safeguarding responsibilities. However, students will be informed about sources of confidential support and advice available outside school, such as GPs and sexual health services.

The School is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of all students. Where a member of staff has reason to believe that a student may be at risk of harm, in distress, or in need of additional support, they will follow the School's Safeguarding Policy and consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or a deputy DSL at the earliest opportunity.

e. Monitoring and Evaluation

Our Trustees have the responsibility to ensure that the RSE programme we deliver, in consultation with the Head, teaching staff, students and parents, is age appropriate and in keeping with the ethos of our school and the DfE statutory guidance and regulations. Trustees will ensure that the resources and programme are monitored periodically.

Teachers, the PSHE Co-coordinator, Assistant Head Wellbeing, Deputy Head Pastoral and the Head will undertake informal evaluation of the programme. The policy will be reviewed annually, unless a more immediate review is needed in response to any new guidance or school-wide concerns.

Student feedback, assess and self-evaluate the programme, via various means, regularly and the PSHE coordinator will also liaise closely with staff delivering the programme to assess the effectiveness of

lessons and resources. The programme will periodically be altered and amended in light of such feedback.

f. Right of withdrawal

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of PSHE. Upon receipt of a request to withdraw the Head will discuss with parents, and if appropriate, the student, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. As a matter of good practice, the Head is likely to discuss the benefits of the child receiving RSE with the parents. Once this discussion has 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 student turns 16. After that point, if the student wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the School will make arrangements to provide the student with sex education. Up until the age of 16, the student will be excused until the request is withdrawn.

This process is the same for students with SEND, however, there may be exceptional circumstances where the Head may want to take a student's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision.

There is no right to withdraw a student of any age from Relationships Education or Health Education.

PPC maintains that it is beneficial for all students to receive Relationships and Sex Education.

g. Equal Opportunities/Inclusivity

Prior Park College is committed to fostering a respectful, inclusive and non-judgemental learning environment in which all students feel safe and valued.

Teaching reflects the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and recognises the protected characteristics defined within it.

RSE lessons are designed to be accessible to all students, including those with SEND and EAL needs. Appropriate adaptations will be made to ensure learning is inclusive and meaningful.

Teaching will be factually accurate, age-appropriate and sensitive to the diverse backgrounds, beliefs and experiences represented within the school community.

Where topics are subject to differing views in society, students will be taught to engage respectfully with those views while understanding the law, safeguarding expectations and individual rights.