POLICY FOR	**RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION**
PERSON RESPONSIBLE	**ASSOCIATE ASSISTANT HEADTEACHER AND DEPUTY HEADTEACHER**
REVIEW DATE	**NOVEMBER 2026**
NEXT REVIEW DATE	**NOVEMBER 2027**
APPROVED BY	**GOVERNING BODY**

1: Purpose and statutory framework

RSE helps pupils develop healthy, safe and respectful relationships, understand sexual and reproductive health, and make informed decisions. It builds self-respect, empathy and the skills to recognise harm, resist pressure and seek help, reflecting The Malling School Way: Caring, Determined and Reflective. It does not promote sexual activity.

The school provides statutory RSE and health education under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019. It has regard to the DfE guidance effective from 1 September 2026, issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. Departures from the guidance's recommendations require good reasons; statutory duties must be met.

This policy works alongside the Equality Act 2010, current Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance, the SEND Code of Practice and the school's safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, SEND and complaints policies.

2: Curriculum and timing

The main RSE programme is taught in Period 1 in Term 3 for Years 7–10 and Term 2 for Year 11. Learning builds on primary education and is revisited through PSHE and relevant subjects, including science and RE. Teaching is age- and stage-appropriate, medically accurate, clear about the law and responsive to pupil needs.

Relationships education develops positive relationships and protection from harm. Sex education covers sexual relationships and sexual health. Health education and science also cover related topics; the withdrawal arrangements in section 7 distinguish these areas.

The programme covers:

- Families and committed relationships, including marriage, civil partnership, family change and parenting.
- Respectful relationships, communication, boundaries, consent, sexual ethics, power, equality and challenging prejudice, including misogyny and harmful online influences.
- Online safety, privacy, image sharing, pornography, deepfakes, sextortion, AI chatbots and managing online conflict.
- Recognising and reporting abuse, exploitation, sexual harassment and violence, coercive control, forced marriage, FGM and other harmful practices.
- Intimate relationships, readiness, choice, contraception, pregnancy options, STIs including HIV, prevention and treatment, and confidential advice.

- Linked health learning about puberty, menstrual and reproductive health, fertility and menopause. Wider statutory health content is covered through PSHE.

The Associate Assistant Headteacher maintains a detailed year-by-year curriculum map showing when all statutory outcomes are taught, revisited and assessed, including through other subjects. It identifies sex education within mixed-content lessons. The current overview will be published on the school website. Parents will be informed of substantive changes.

Curriculum transparency

A detailed curriculum overview, organised by year group, is maintained and published on the school website here: https://www.themallingschool.kent.sch.uk/attachments/download.asp?file=860&type=pdf

This identifies the knowledge and skills taught, the timing of delivery and the distinction between relationships education, sex education, health education and relevant science curriculum content. The school reviews this overview annually to ensure that all statutory learning outcomes are covered, appropriately sequenced and revisited.

3: Delivery through recorded RSE lessons

RSE is delivered in mixed-sex tutor groups through pre-recorded teaching prepared or approved by the PSHE lead. Approximately 25 minutes of teaching and pupil activities sit within the 30-minute Period 1 session. A tutor or appropriately member of staff remains present throughout.

Lessons use an initial understanding check, individual mini-whiteboard responses, fictional scenarios, private "Pause and Think" reflection, staged answers and a final check. Pupils are not asked to disclose personal experiences.

Tutors pause recordings, check responses, clarify misconceptions and identify pupils needing support. The programme includes planned teacher-led exchanges or supported individual follow-up in which pupils discuss and evaluate fictional scenarios and practise skills such as expressing boundaries and seeking help. Additional supervised teaching time will be arranged where needed. Recordings and private questions alone do not replace this participation.

Pupils may ask questions privately or submit written questions, including anonymously. Tutors refer questions they cannot answer accurately to the Associate Assistant Headteacher or Pastoral Leader and arrange a timely response. Respectful ground rules prohibit naming others, personal questions and sharing personal sexual experiences.

Quality assurance of recorded lessons

Pre-recorded teaching is used to support consistent and accurate delivery but does not replace the active role of the tutor or appropriately trained member of staff. Staff will facilitate planned opportunities for discussion, questioning, clarification and the practical application of knowledge and skills. Where additional explanation, specialist input or adapted teaching is required, appropriate arrangements will be made to ensure that pupils receive effective teaching and support.

Resources and external contributors

The Associate Assistant Headteacher creates and checks all recordings and resources for accuracy, accessibility, age appropriateness and alignment with this policy, and reviews them when guidance or needs change. External contributors, such as school nurses, require advance approval and checks of credentials, plans and materials. Safeguarding arrangements and staff supervision will be agreed, and parents informed of planned providers. The school remains responsible for all content and delivery.

4: Inclusion and equality

The Associate Assistant Headteacher plans reasonable adjustments so that pupils with SEND can access RSE and prepare for adulthood. Through our universal provision, these may include clear language, vocabulary support, captions or transcripts, additional pauses, repetition, alternative responses and supported teaching. Staff check understanding and arrange catch-up where learning is missed.

Pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to abuse, exploitation and bullying. Staff also consider trauma and individual circumstances, agreeing support with the Pastoral Lead where appropriate without exposing personal information to the class.

Teaching meets Equality Act duties, including the Public Sector Equality Duty. It reflects different family structures without stigma, integrates healthy same-sex relationships and makes sexual health information relevant to all pupils. Pupils learn respect for all protected characteristics and religious and non-religious beliefs. Beliefs are distinguished from facts and law.

Teaching about biological sex and gender reassignment explains the facts, law and distinct legal protections accurately, including protection from discrimination and respect for dignity. Contested views are not taught as fact, including the claim that everyone has a gender identity. Resources must avoid reinforcing gender stereotypes, encouraging pupils to question their gender or presenting social transition as a simple solution to distress. External resources on this topic are included in advance parent consultation.

5: Safeguarding and questions

Staff challenge prejudice and harmful attitudes. Sexual harassment and violence are never dismissed as banter. Teaching makes clear that anyone can experience abuse and that the victim is never to blame.

Pupils are told how to seek help from school staff and appropriate external services, including when concerned about their own behaviour. Staff cannot promise secrecy where someone may be at risk. They listen without investigating, record concerns accurately and act immediately under the safeguarding policy, informing the DSL or deputy. Mandatory reporting duties, including the FGM duty where applicable, must be followed. Information is shared only with those who need it.

Questions beyond the lesson, including questions from pupils withdrawn from sex education, are handled sensitively and may be followed up privately with the Associate Assistant Headteacher or DSL. Staff consider the pupil's needs, agreed withdrawal and safeguarding risks, and provide appropriate information or signposting. They must not direct a child to discuss concerns at home where this could increase risk. Asking a question does not automatically re-enrol a withdrawn pupil in lessons.

6: Working with parents and carers

The school proactively consults parents when developing and reviewing this policy, using opportunities such as focus groups, representative resources and written feedback. Pupil views and staff experience also inform review. Governors approve the policy following consultation. It is published on the school website and supplied free of charge on request. Consultation does not give a veto over statutory content.

Parents receive information about the programme and its sex education content before delivery. They can request access to all materials used, including recordings, slides, scripts and external resources, through the Associate Assistant Headteacher. Access may be through secure viewing or a presentation, with alternatives, including take-home copies where needed, for parents unable to use these arrangements.

Copyright affects how materials are shared, not whether parents may view them. Authorship will be acknowledged and parents asked, where relevant, not to copy or redistribute materials except as copyright law allows.

7: Withdrawal from sex education

Parents may request withdrawal from some or all sex education within statutory RSE. Requests will normally be granted following discussion; the Headteacher may refuse only in exceptional circumstances, such as a specific vulnerability or safeguarding concern, recording and explaining the reasons.

There is no right to withdraw from relationships education, health education or science, including puberty and reproduction taught in science. Relationships education may cover sensitive safeguarding topics such as sexual violence without explaining the detail of sexual activity. Withdrawal is determined by content and learning objectives, not lesson titles; compulsory learning continues.

Parents should write to the Associate Assistant Headteacher using Appendix 1 or an equivalent letter or email; support is available if needed. The Associate Assistant Headteacher or appropriate senior colleague will discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil, clarifying content, benefits and possible effects of withdrawal. The decision, scope, reasons and agreed arrangements will be recorded securely.

From three terms before their sixteenth birthday, pupils may choose to receive sex education despite parental withdrawal. Staff explain this right and arrange teaching if a pupil opts back in. During withdrawal, pupils receive supervised, appropriate and purposeful education, with arrangements covering recordings and catch-up. Concerns can be raised through the school's complaints procedure.

Withdrawal arrangements

Where lessons contain both compulsory relationships or health education and sex education from which withdrawal may be requested, the school will identify the relevant content and make suitable arrangements to ensure that pupils continue to receive all compulsory teaching. Requests for withdrawal will be considered individually by the Headteacher, following discussion with parents and, where appropriate, the pupil. Requests will normally be granted, except in exceptional circumstances, such as where a pupil's particular vulnerability or safeguarding needs justify a different decision.

8: Responsibilities

Governing Body and Headteacher

Governors approve this policy and hold the Headteacher accountable for curriculum coverage, pupil progress, accessibility and implementation. The Headteacher ensures adequate time, staffing and training, consistent delivery and appropriate decisions on withdrawal.

PSHE leadership

The Deputy Headteacher, Associate Assistant Headteacher and the Lead for Personal Development oversee the curriculum, recordings and resources, staff guidance, parent consultation and access, follow-up learning and evaluation. They coordinate coverage with other subjects and ensure sex education content is clearly identified.

Tutors and teaching staff

Staff support learning actively, model respectful behaviour, check understanding, follow withdrawal arrangements and respond to pupil needs and safeguarding concerns.

SENCO and safeguarding team

The SENCO supports accessibility and reasonable adjustments. The DSL and deputies advise on vulnerabilities, disclosures, safe responses and referrals, and help the Associate Assistant Headteacher respond to emerging risks.

Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage respectfully, follow ground rules and seek help when needed. They are never required to disclose personal experiences or beliefs to the group.

9: Training and monitoring

Staff are briefed before supporting recordings on lesson aims, sensitive content, answers, pause points, adjustments, withdrawal and referral routes. Training covers safeguarding, difficult questions, challenging prejudice and assessment, with specialist support where required.

Senior leaders evaluate delivery through planning and resource reviews, learning walks, tutor feedback and pupil voice. Initial and final questions, mini-whiteboards and scenario responses identify misconceptions and guide reteaching. Personal disclosure is never assessed.

Monitoring checks statutory coverage, sequencing, teaching time, meaningful participation and skills practice, SEND access, catch-up and support. Governors receive findings and actions with pupil confidentiality protected.

10: Policy review

This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if guidance or provision changes, with parent consultation and pupil and staff feedback. The school will record consultation outcomes and the Governing Body's actual approval and review dates.

Reference: DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education statutory guidance, July 2025, effective 1 September 2026.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

Appendix 1

Request for withdrawal from sex education

RSE TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS	
Name of child	Class
Name of parent	Date
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education	
Any other information you would like the school to consider	
Parent signature	

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL
Agreed actions from discussion with parents