



RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION, RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL WELL-BEING POLICY

March 2026



Document Control

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Document Change History

The table below contains the changes made between the different final editions of this document set for approval. This is to help provide information to those reviewing and approving the document of the changes being made.

Version	Section	Details of Change
March 2026	All	Adapt and Adopt policy



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 At The Circle Trust, our vision is to help every child and young person grow into a confident, resilient, and responsible individual, well-prepared for a happy and successful adult life. We believe that Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education are central to this journey. These subjects give pupils the knowledge, skills, and self-belief they need to make thoughtful choices about their wellbeing, health, and relationships.
- 1.2 Our approach is guided by the Trust's values of inclusion, respect, and ambition for every learner. Teaching is always evidence-informed, age-appropriate, and responsive to the needs of pupils in both our primary and secondary schools.
- 1.3 We recognise that physical health, mental wellbeing, and positive relationships are closely linked. By supporting pupils to understand these connections, we aim to help them build resilience, make safe and informed choices, and develop lifelong habits that support happiness and fulfilment.
- 1.4 The Trust has a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to make sure our provision is accessible to all pupils, whatever their background or circumstances. We are sensitive to the diversity of cultural and faith perspectives within our school communities, while ensuring that every child receives the knowledge they need to stay safe, healthy, and aware of their rights.
- 1.5 As part of this, when the time is right developmentally, teaching about lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people and relationships will be included naturally within the curriculum, rather than taught separately. This will always be done with care, at a level suited to pupils' maturity, and with an emphasis on respect, equality, and the law. Our commitment is to nurture understanding, celebrate diversity, and prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.
- 1.6 This policy has been shaped in consultation with parents, carers, pupils, and staff across the Trust. It is reviewed each year, with parents invited to contribute to any significant updates, ensuring that it continues to meet both statutory requirements and the evolving needs of our communities.

2 Aims and objectives.

- 2.1 Through high-quality, evidence-based, and age-appropriate Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education, The Circle Trust aims to support every pupil to thrive both now and in the future. We want our pupils to grow in confidence, to value themselves and others, and to develop the knowledge and skills they need for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- 2.2 By the end of their time in our schools, we hope that pupils will have developed resilience, self-respect, empathy, and a sense of belonging that prepares them for positive relationships and active participation in society.
- 2.3 More specifically, Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education are designed to help pupils to:
 - 2.3.1 Build healthy, respectful relationships – with a focus on family, friendships, and the wider community.



- 2.3.2 Understand health and wellbeing – including how to stay physically and mentally healthy, and how to recognise and manage risks such as drugs, alcohol, and unhealthy influences.
 - 2.3.3 Learn about intimacy and sexual development – at the appropriate stage, ensuring pupils understand consent, respect, and safe choices.
 - 2.3.4 Develop positive mental health and emotional wellbeing – including strategies for resilience, self-regulation, and seeking help when needed.
 - 2.3.5 Grow personal character and values – such as kindness, integrity, generosity, honesty, and respect for diversity.
- 2.4 Our goal is that pupils leave us equipped with not only the essential knowledge, but also the confidence and empathy to lead safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

3 Definition of relationships education and relationships and sex education (RSE)

- 3.1 Relationships Education and RSE form a continuum of learning from primary to secondary school. Together, they provide pupils with the foundations for healthy, safe, and respectful relationships, while preparing them for the changes and responsibilities of growing up.
- 3.2 In the Primary phase:**
- 3.2.1 The focus is on the fundamental building blocks of positive relationships. Pupils learn about:
 - 3.2.2 Friendships and family relationships.
 - 3.2.3 The importance of kindness, respect, honesty, and consideration.
 - 3.2.4 Taking turns, listening, and resolving disagreements respectfully.
 - 3.2.5 Personal privacy, boundaries, and how to recognise and ask for help from trusted adults.
- 3.3 This stage equips children with the skills and understanding to build strong, supportive relationships and to recognise what safe, respectful behaviour looks like.
- 3.4 In the Secondary phase:**
- 3.4.1 Pupils build on these foundations through RSE, which is lifelong learning about physical, emotional, social, and moral development. At this stage, pupils learn about:
 - 3.4.2 Healthy and respectful intimate relationships, including sexuality and sexual health.
 - 3.4.3 The different kinds of committed, stable relationships, including marriage and civil partnerships.
 - 3.4.4 The importance of equality, consent, and respect in all relationships.
 - 3.4.5 Human reproduction, sexual health, and the emotional aspects of growing up.



3.4.6 How to recognise when relationships may be unsafe, and how to seek support and guidance.

3.5 RSE does not promote early sexual activity or undermine the role of parents. Instead, it helps pupils to respect themselves and others, understand why waiting until the right time is important, and develop the confidence to make safe, healthy, and fulfilling choices in adulthood.

4 Roles and responsibilities

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy. Roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each section of the Trust and academy community are set out in detail below.

4.1 The Board of trustees:

4.1.1 Provide strategic oversight to ensure Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education are effective, inclusive, and aligned with the Trust's vision and statutory duties.

4.1.2 Review regular reports and hold leaders to account for continuous improvement.

4.2 The Chief Executive Officer (CEO):

4.2.1 Ensure that all schools in the Trust deliver high-quality provision in line with statutory guidance.

4.2.2 Provide assurance to the Board of Trustees, set expectations, and ensure staff across the Trust have access to appropriate training, resources, and support.

4.3 The headteacher:

4.3.1 Lead the implementation of this policy in their school.

4.3.2 Ensure provision is well planned, effectively managed, and delivered across the curriculum without unnecessary duplication.

4.3.3 Monitor quality through regular review and self-evaluation.

4.3.4 Ensure teaching is age-appropriate, accessible for pupils with SEND, and appropriately resourced and timetabled.

4.3.5 Oversee the use of external providers, ensuring their input is suitable and consistent with the policy.

4.3.6 Liaise with parents about provision, address concerns, and manage requests for withdrawal from non-statutory elements in line with guidance.

The Staff:

4.3.7 Keep up to date with school policy and curriculum requirements.

4.3.8 Participate in professional learning to maintain confidence and knowledge in teaching these subjects.



4.3.9 Create a supportive learning environment, encourage pupils to raise concerns, and respond appropriately.

4.3.10 Refer issues to senior colleagues where additional support or expertise is required.

4.4 Parents

4.4.1 The Trust hopes to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents through mutual understanding, cooperation, and trust. Working in partnership to support their child's personal, social, and emotional development.

4.4.2 Encourage open conversations at home about matters raised in school.

4.4.3 Seek additional support from the school where further guidance or clarification is needed.

4.5 Pupils

4.5.1 Engage positively with Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education.

4.5.2 Show respect for others' feelings and beliefs and follow agreed ground rules for discussion and confidentiality.

4.5.3 Support their peers in a considerate way.

4.5.4 Pupils who do not meet these expectations will be supported and guided in line with the Trust's behaviour policy.

5 Delivery of relationships education, RSE and health education

5.1 Relationships and Sex Education, RSE, and Health Education will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual, and inclusive way. Lessons will provide a safe environment in which pupils can ask questions, explore different values and perspectives, and develop the skills to make informed decisions.

5.2 Teaching will:

5.2.1 Be age-appropriate and responsive to the developmental needs of pupils.

5.2.2 Address contemporary online risks, including exposure to pornography, online sexual content, image-based abuse, and the potential harms of AI-generated imagery and deepfakes, in an age-appropriate and safeguarding-informed way.

5.2.3 Use correct scientific terminology for body parts, while acknowledging and discussing common social or colloquial terms in the context of respectful language.

5.2.4 Encourage pupils to differentiate between fact, opinion, and belief, and to understand the law as it relates to relationships and sexual health.

5.2.5 Staff will ensure that all resources are appropriate for pupils' age and needs. Materials and approaches will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain current, relevant, and accessible.



5.3 Primary schools:

5.3.1 In our primary schools, Relationships Education will be taught mainly through PSHE, science, and cross-curricular links. Teachers will be mindful that children of the same age may be at different stages of development and will adapt teaching methods accordingly. Sensitive topics may be explored in whole-class, small-group, or one-to-one settings as appropriate.

5.4 Secondary schools:

5.4.1 In our secondary schools, RSE will be taught mainly through PSHE, science, religious education, and cross-curricular links. Provision will build on the foundations established in primary school and prepare pupils for the responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

6 Relationships education and RSE: Curriculum and outcomes

- 6.1 By the end of primary education, pupils will have been taught the knowledge and skills set out in Annex 1. This includes developing an understanding of positive relationships, respect, personal boundaries, and the importance of kindness and honesty.
- 6.2 Staff recognise that primary-aged pupils may ask questions relating to sex or sexuality that go beyond the planned curriculum. When this happens, teachers will use professional judgement to decide the most appropriate way to respond, taking account of the child's age, maturity, and individual needs. Responses may be given in a whole-class setting, small groups, or individually.
- 6.3 By the end of secondary education, pupils will have been taught the knowledge and skills set out in Annex 2. This builds on prior learning and extends to cover sexual health, consent, equality, and preparation for adult life. This includes learning about sexual harassment, peer-on-peer abuse, consent in everyday interactions, and how to recognise, challenge and report harmful or unsafe behaviour.
- 6.4 The Trust's approach ensures that Relationships Education and RSE are progressive, age-appropriate, and responsive to pupil needs. Curriculum content will be regularly reviewed to ensure accuracy, inclusivity, and relevance.

7 Health education: Physical health and mental well-being

- 7.1 The Trust is committed to promoting the health and wellbeing of all pupils. Health Education provides pupils with the knowledge, skills, and strategies to maintain physical health, develop resilience, and support positive mental wellbeing.
- 7.2 Teaching will enable pupils to:
- 7.2.1 Recognise the link between physical health, mental wellbeing, and lifestyle choices.
 - 7.2.2 Develop self-control and strategies for self-regulation.



7.2.3 Build confidence in their ability to persevere, respond calmly to setbacks, and seek help when needed.

7.2.4 Understand the importance of rest, nutrition, exercise, and balance in maintaining health.

7.3 The Trust believes that a whole-school approach to health and wellbeing contributes positively to behaviour, learning, and academic outcomes.

7.4 In our primary schools, Health Education will be taught mainly through PSHE, science, computing, and physical education. By the end of primary education, pupils will have been taught the knowledge and skills set out in Annex 3.

7.5 In our secondary schools, Health Education will be taught through PSHE, science, computing, physical education, and tutor programmes. By the end of secondary education, pupils will have been taught the knowledge and skills set out in Annex 4.

8 Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities

8.1 The Trust is committed to ensuring that Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education are accessible to all pupils. We recognise that some pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying, or other challenges, and that these subjects can be particularly important in equipping them with knowledge and strategies to stay safe. Particular attention will be given to supporting pupils with SEND to recognise online risks, understand consent and boundaries, and know how to seek help in digital and real-world contexts.

8.2 Teaching will be:

8.2.1 Sensitive and age-appropriate, taking account of developmental stage rather than chronological age alone.

8.2.2 Differentiated and personalised, to meet the specific needs of pupils.

8.2.3 Inclusive, ensuring all pupils have access to the same core information.

8.3 Staff will make reasonable adjustments to remove barriers to learning and will follow the principles of the SEND Code of Practice and the Trust's SEND Policy when planning and delivering content.

8.4 A variety of teaching methods and resources will be used to ensure accessibility, including visual supports, adapted materials, and additional adult support where appropriate.

9 Right to request withdrawal from sex education

9.1 The Trust recognises the importance of parents and carers in supporting their child's learning in Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education. We aim to build understanding and trust by being open about what is taught and by providing opportunities for parents to view resources and discuss the curriculum.

9.2 **Primary schools**



9.2.1 Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education.

9.2.2 Parents may withdraw their child from any additional sex education taught outside the statutory science curriculum. Requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher.

9.3 Secondary schools

9.3.1 Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education.

9.3.2 Parents may request that their child be withdrawn from some or all the sex education elements of RSE that are not part of the science curriculum. Requests must be made in writing to the Headteacher.

9.3.3 Following discussion with the school, requests will be granted except in exceptional circumstances. The right to request withdrawal is valid up to and until three terms before the child's 16th birthday. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education, the school will provide this.

9.4 Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will ensure that they continue to receive appropriate and purposeful education during this time.

10 Confidentiality and child protection

10.1 The Trust aims to create a safe and supportive environment in which pupils feel able to seek help and guidance on matters relating to relationships, health, or personal concerns.

10.2 Teachers will make clear to pupils that they cannot promise unconditional confidentiality. Where a safeguarding or child protection concern arises, staff must follow the Trust's safeguarding and child protection procedures, in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)*.

10.3 If a pupil under the age of sixteen discloses that they are having, or are considering having, sexual intercourse, staff should:

10.3.1 Ensure that the pupil is aware of sources of advice and support, including contraceptive and sexual health services.

10.3.2 Encourage the pupil to talk with a parent or carer, while recognising that pupils may initially feel more comfortable confiding in a trusted teacher.

10.3.3 Consider whether the disclosure raises a child protection concern, particularly where there may be evidence of coercion, exploitation, or abuse.

10.4 If a member of staff is informed that a pupil under the age of thirteen is having, or is considering having, sexual intercourse, this will always be treated as a child protection issue and referred to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

10.5 Pupils with SEND may be more vulnerable to exploitation or less able to recognise unsafe situations. Staff should be alert to this and seek advice from the DSL where concerns arise.



11 Equal opportunities

- 11.1 The Trust is committed to ensuring that Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education are accessible and relevant to all pupils. Teaching will promote equality, inclusion, and respect, in line with the Equality Act 2010.
- 11.2 Lessons will normally be delivered in mixed-gender groups. However, in some cases (e.g. teaching about menstruation or personal hygiene), single-gender groupings may be used to support confidence and understanding.
- 11.3 Teaching will actively challenge harmful gender stereotypes, sexism and misogyny, supporting pupils to develop respectful attitudes, empathy and a clear understanding of equality and the law.
- 11.4 Content will be taught in a way that is age- and stage-appropriate, sensitive to cultural and faith backgrounds, and inclusive of all pupils, including those with SEND.
- 11.5 Diversity of personal, social, and sexual preferences will be acknowledged and respected.
- 11.6 Prejudiced views will be challenged, and any form of bullying related to relationships, gender, or sexuality will be addressed in line with the Trust's behaviour policy.
- 11.7 Through this approach, the Trust seeks to ensure that all pupils feel valued, respected, and able to participate fully in these subjects.

12 Complaints

- 12.1 The Trust values open communication with parents and carers and aims to resolve concerns quickly and constructively.
- 12.2 If parents or carers have any concerns about the delivery or content of Relationships Education, RSE, or Health Education, they should raise these in the first instance with the class teacher or a relevant member of staff. If concerns remain unresolved, they should be referred to the Headteacher.
- 12.3 Where issues cannot be resolved at school level, parents may follow the Trust's Complaints Policy, which sets out the formal process for raising and escalating concerns.
- 12.4 The Trust is committed to listening to parents' views and ensuring that concerns are considered carefully, while maintaining its duty to deliver the statutory curriculum.



Annex 1 - Relationships education primary stage curriculum and outcomes

Definition of Relationships Education

At Emmbrook Junior School, Relationships Education is a statutory element of the curriculum that equips pupils with the knowledge, skills and values needed to form safe, healthy and positive relationships. Within the primary phase, Relationships Education helps children understand:

- The importance of family, friendships and supportive relationships.
- Respect for themselves and others, including understanding personal boundaries.
- The foundations of emotional wellbeing and resilience.
- How to keep themselves safe, including online.

The purpose of Relationships Education is to support pupils' personal development, safeguard their wellbeing, and prepare them for life in modern Britain. It contributes directly to our safeguarding responsibilities and underpins our ethos of creating a caring and respectful school community.

Subject Content and Delivery

Scheme of Work

Emmbrook Junior School follows the SCARF Curriculum (Safety, Caring, Achievement, Resilience, Friendship), a comprehensive, progressive PSHE scheme that provides full coverage of statutory Relationships Education requirements. The curriculum is structured into six recurring units:

- Me and My Relationships
- Valuing Difference
- Keeping Myself Safe
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Being My Best
- Growing and Changing

Each year group follows a sequenced programme of learning that builds on prior knowledge and ensures age-appropriate progression.

Modes of Delivery

Relationships Education at Emmbrook Junior School is delivered through:

- Dedicated PSHE lessons using the SCARF scheme (core curriculum delivery).
- The Science curriculum, covering statutory biological knowledge about life cycles and human development.
- Whole-school and class assemblies, promoting respect, diversity, kindness and anti-bullying messages.



- Cross-curricular links, particularly in Computing (online safety) and safeguarding themes embedded across school life.

Staff Responsible for Delivery

- Class teachers deliver the majority of Relationships Education to ensure consistency and maintain trusted relationships with pupils.
- Learning Support Assistants may support targeted groups or individuals.
- The PSHE Lead and Senior Leadership Team monitor provision and support staff as needed.

Provision for Pupils with SEND

Relationships Education is inclusive and accessible for all pupils. Adaptations may include:

- Differentiated resources and vocabulary.
- Visual supports, scaffolds, or additional explanation.
- Pre-teaching of key ideas and concepts.
- Small-group or 1:1 reinforcement where required.
- Use of personalised targets in pupils' SEND plans to ensure relevance.

Staff work closely with the SENDCo to ensure content is appropriately adapted, sensitive, and accessible to all learners.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness and impact of Relationships Education at Emmbrook Junior School is monitored through:

- Teacher assessment and in-lesson observation of pupils' understanding.
- Pupil voice, including feedback during lessons, surveys and informal discussion.
- Work scrutiny and lesson observations as part of PSHE subject monitoring.
- Annual curriculum review, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance and alignment with school needs.
- Safeguarding monitoring, assessing whether children demonstrate an improved understanding of personal safety and respectful behaviours.

Findings inform curriculum development, staff training and school improvement planning.

Position on Sex Education

Statutory Science Content

In line with the National Curriculum for Science, pupils learn about:

- Life cycles of animals, including humans.
- Basic human development from birth to old age.
- Reproduction in plants and animals (non-graphic biological content).



These elements are statutory and cannot be withdrawn from.

Additional Sex Education

- Additional learning may include an explanation of how a baby is conceived, taught within the SCARF Growing and Changing unit (in Upper Key Stage 2).
- This content builds on statutory science by providing context and clarification, delivered in an age-appropriate and factual manner.
- Lessons are taught by class teachers using SCARF materials.

Parental Rights

Withdrawal from Relationships Education

Relationships Education is a statutory requirement for all primary-age pupils. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from any part of Relationships Education.

Withdrawal from Additional Sex Education

Parents may request withdrawal from any sex education that goes beyond the statutory science curriculum.

Requests should be made to the headteacher.

A discussion will take place to ensure clarity about the lesson content and the educational benefits to the child.

Where withdrawal is agreed, pupils will be provided with appropriate alternative work and supervision.



Annex 2 - RSE Secondary stage curriculum and outcomes

Not applicable for this school.



Annex 3 - Health education primary stage curriculum and outcomes

Definition of Health Education

Health Education at Emmbrook Junior School forms a core part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum and is designed to support pupils' physical and mental wellbeing. It helps pupils:

- Understand how to maintain good physical health, mental wellbeing and emotional resilience.
- Develop knowledge and habits that support healthy lifestyle choices.
- Learn how to stay safe, including online and in their daily lives.
- Build confidence, independence and the ability to seek help when needed.

Health Education prepares pupils for the challenges of growing up and contributes to safeguarding and whole-school wellbeing.

Subject Content and Delivery

Scheme of Work

Emmbrook Junior School uses the SCARF Curriculum, which provides a structured and progressive approach to Health Education. Relevant content is woven throughout SCARF's six units:

- Me and My Relationships
- Valuing Difference
- Keeping Myself Safe
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Being My Best
- Growing and Changing

Health Education themes develop over time, ensuring concepts are revisited and deepened in an age-appropriate way.

How Lessons Are Delivered

Health Education is delivered through a whole-school approach involving:

- PSHE lessons using the SCARF scheme (core delivery).
- Science lessons covering health, nutrition, the human body and life processes.
- PE lessons supporting physical fitness, activity and healthy routines.
- Assemblies reinforcing themes such as mental health, responsibility and safe choices.
- Cross-curricular work, especially in Computing (online safety).
- Specialist visitors, including Coram Life Education, to enhance learning.

Staff Responsible for Teaching



Class teachers deliver Health Education through PSHE, Science and cross-curricular learning. The PE and Science leads contribute specialist knowledge relating to physical health and biological development. Teaching assistants support pupils where needed, and external specialists provide additional sessions. The PSHE Lead oversees curriculum quality and staff training.

Provision for Pupils with SEND

Health Education is fully inclusive and accessible. Adjustments include:

- Use of visual resources and simplified language.
- Scaffolded tasks and additional explanations.
- Adapted pacing or pre-teaching of key concepts.
- Adult support for consolidation.
- Personalisation aligned to SEND support plans or EHCPs.

Staff work with the SENDCo to ensure lessons meet a wide range of needs sensitively and effectively.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school evaluates Health Education through:

- Ongoing teacher assessment and questioning.
- Observation of pupils' developing behaviours, skills and attitudes.
- Pupil voice activities, including discussion and surveys.
- Review of work produced in lessons.
- Annual curriculum review to ensure progression, relevance and statutory coverage.

These processes inform future planning, training and improvements.

Statutory Status and Parental Rights

Statutory Status

Health Education is compulsory in all primary schools and forms part of the statutory curriculum.

Parental Withdrawal Rights

Parents **cannot** withdraw their child from any part of Health Education.

(Withdrawal applies only to sex education taught beyond the statutory science curriculum.)



Key Themes Covered in Primary Health Education at Emmbrook Junior School

Mental Wellbeing

Pupils learn to recognise, describe and manage a range of feelings, develop resilience, and understand when and how to seek help.

Internet Safety and Harms

Children learn how to stay safe online, recognise risks, maintain privacy and understand how digital activity can impact wellbeing.

Physical Health and Fitness

Pupils explore the benefits of exercise and physical activity and understand how it supports both physical and mental health.

Healthy Eating

Children learn about balanced diets, food groups and how healthy food choices affect their bodies and long-term wellbeing.

Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco

Learning focuses on staying safe around medicines and household substances, with age-appropriate teaching about the risks related to smoking, alcohol and drugs.

Health and Prevention

Pupils learn about hygiene, oral health, sleep, illness prevention, and other ways to maintain good health.

Basic First Aid

Children learn simple first aid skills and understand how to respond to common injuries and emergencies, including calling 999.

Changing Adolescent Body (Puberty)

Pupils are taught about the physical and emotional changes associated with puberty and how to maintain good personal hygiene, delivered in a reassuring and factual way.



Annex 4 - Health education secondary stage curriculum and outcomes

Not applicable for this school.