



# MILTON ABBAY SCHOOL

**Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education,  
including Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)  
Policy and Handbook 2025-2026**

Issue Date:	September 2025 v2 November 2025
Review Date:	September 2026
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## **Aims of this policy**

### **Aims**

Our (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) PSHE education programme, which includes our Relationships and Education (RSE) Policy, is underpinned by the school ethos where we are small by choice, to enable extraordinary focus on the holistic development of each individual. Wellbeing underpins optimal development and achievement in all areas. We work together to create a healthy, happy, safe environment for all and kindness, self-respect, tolerance and respect for others are central to our community. We are committed to removing barriers to learning and equipping students with the strategies they need to succeed and prepare our students to take on the challenges of 21st Century life. At Milton Abbey, we aim to create an environment that enables pupils to build a secure emotional platform to support their personal, social and academic wellbeing. The details of the curriculum can be found later in this document.

RSE aims to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague, and a range of healthy, loving relationships. Our teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health are delivered in age-appropriate settings, in a context which emphasises the importance of respect, love and care for oneself and others.

Effective RSE does not encourage or prompt early sexual experimentation but aims to teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity and aid them in developing safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships at the appropriate time. Our RSE is delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, allowing our pupils to ask questions in a safe and supportive environment.

## **Roles & responsibilities**

### ***SLT and Governors***

PSHE education is overseen by the Deputy Head Pastoral and Deputy Head Academic and by the Governors, in particular the Safeguarding Governor.

### ***Head of PSHE***

The Head of PSHE education is Sarah Badley who is also part of the Senior Leadership and Safeguarding Teams of the school. The Head of PSHE has designed the Milton Abbey Scheme of Work taking into account statutory subjects, by looking at safeguarding and pastoral issues that affect our school and in the light of feedback from pupils, staff and parents.

### ***PSHE education teachers***

PSHE education is taught by a small group of teachers who usually teach all of one year group. Teachers follow PSHE Association Guidance in Effective Teaching and A Safe Classroom. Teachers receive online, internal and external training in PSHE and in RSE. Where PSHE (including RSE) is being delivered by non-specialist staff (e.g., in a cover lesson), content material will be provided that explores general themes within relationships. Staff are instructed not to tackle any subject in which they do not have appropriate expertise or training and will not be placed in a position of teaching core RSE without appropriate support and training.

### ***Visitors***

Where appropriate, external speakers will deliver aspects of the curriculum to support the PSHE education programme. This will often be because the speaker has additional experience in a particular

topic area. The Head of PSHE will work with external speakers to ensure they are covering the required topics in a manner suitable for our pupils and in line with the school Visiting Speaker Policy & Guidelines. Teaching staff will be present during the visitor sessions to monitor the delivery is appropriate.

## **Engaging with parents and other stakeholders**

This policy is available on the school website.

### ***Pupils***

Pupil feedback is sought via whole school surveys, discussions at House councils and whole school Round Table and feedback on lessons and activities throughout the year. Key areas in the previous school year relate to relationships and finance.

### ***Parents***

We are committed to working with parents. This policy is available to parents through the school website. We offer support and encourage discussion of topics at home through school social media posts and the school newsletter. If a parent has questions about our PSHE provision, they should contact the Head of PSHE education. Parents will be consulted about the RSE and PSHE provision in the school annually via an online survey and informed about the right to withdraw from sex education elements of RSE.

### **Right to Withdraw (RSE)**

The school is committed to working in partnership with our parents. The school recognises that parents have the legal right request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of sex education (but not relationships education) delivered as part of statutory RSE. Information about the right to withdraw will be sent to all parents each year. This will explain the process. Requests to withdraw a child from sex education must be made in writing to the Head.

Before granting a withdrawal request, the Head will discuss the request with the Deputy Head Pastoral and with the parents and, as appropriate, the pupil, to ensure the wishes of the parents and pupil are understood. For requests concerning the withdrawal of a pupil with SEND, the Deputy Head Pastoral and SENDCO will ensure that the pupils' specific needs are considered.

The following are considered by the school to be the sex education elements of our curriculum:

- Sexual health, including sexually transmitted infections
- Contraception
- Pregnancy choices and outcomes
- Role of sex/pleasure in intimate relationships

The Deputy Head Pastoral will clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum with the parents and inform them of the benefits of their child receiving RSE and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have. All discussions with parents will be documented and records will be kept securely on the pupil's file.

Following discussions with parents, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw their child up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive RSE rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the pupil with RSE.

Pupils who are withdrawn from RSE will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the full period of withdrawal.

### ***School staff***

Views of school staff, including those with responsibility for areas such as online safety and equality diversity and inclusion, will be sought via an annual survey will also be consulted on the education programme.

## Current Legislation & Guidance

### **Legislation**

PSHE education is compulsory in independent schools, and most of the subject is now compulsory in all schools (including maintained, academies and free schools) as of September 2020. Statutory guidance outlines what schools must cover, but not all that should be covered as part of broader PSHE provision that also includes economic wellbeing and careers education.

The Department for Education (DfE) considers PSHE education 'an important and necessary part of all pupils' education and says that the 'All schools should teach PSHE'. Section 2.5 of the national curriculum also states that all state schools 'should make provision for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE), drawing on good practice'.

PSHE is the mechanism through which Relationships and Sex Education is delivered at Milton Abbey. The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under section 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, outline the compulsory nature of Relationships Education for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

Please see the below links for full guidance:

- [The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education \(England\) Regulations 2019](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025](#)
- [Teaching About Relationships, Sex and Health 2021](#)

The school is aware of the updated Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance, published in July 2025, which will be implemented as required by September 2026.

### **Links to school policies**

This PSHE policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Alcohol Policy
- Anti-bullying Statement
- Curriculum Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Mental Health Policy and Procedure for Responding to Mental Health Concerns
- Online Safety Policy which includes the Pupil Acceptable Use Policy
- Behaviour Policy (Pupils)
- Safeguarding Policy which includes Child-on-Child Abuse and the Prevent Duty
- SEN Policy (and provision for pupils with EHC Plans)
- Relationship and Sex Education Policy
- Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) Policy, which includes Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Fundamental British Values
- Substance Misuse Policy
- Visiting Speaker Policy and Guidelines

Milton Abbey School recognises its duties under The Equality Act 2010. Under the provision of The Equality Act 2010 schools must not:

- unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation.

The Equality Act 2010 covers the way that the curriculum is delivered:

- RSE issues must be taught in such a way that does not subject pupils to discrimination. All pupils at Milton Abbey School are given equal access to RSE, including those who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community.
- We must ensure that young people are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age and the religious and cultural background of the pupils concerned.
- All political issues must be taught with a balanced view.

The Education Act 2002 requires all schools to teach a curriculum that is 'broadly based, balanced and meets the needs of pupils. Schools must promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils whilst preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. It is also essential to provide opportunities that ISI expectations, particularly around safeguarding to support the school's wider responsibilities for pupils' behaviour, welfare and wellbeing.

### ***Policy review***

This policy has been created by The Head of PSHE. Pupil, parent and staff views are sought and feed into the annual policy review and into the education programme. The next review date will be July 2026 for implementation in September 2026.

## **PSHE Education Curriculum Design**

### **Curriculum planning**

The Milton Abbey PSHE programme has been designed by the Head of PSHE using the statutory elements for RSE, many elements of the Health guidance (which are not statutory for Independent schools) and in line with our local priorities from our school data: relationships, mental health and online safety. The broader topic areas (following the PSHE Association programmes of study) are therefore: relations and sex education, health education and the wider world (careers, finance, citizenship). The curriculum addresses pupil's current experiences and preparation for their future and provides a spiral curriculum to develop knowledge, skills and attributes and prior learning is extended. Some topics are covered every year due to their importance (e.g. healthy relationships) and some, every other year. As well as developing knowledge, pupils are given opportunities to develop skills, especially in relation to communication in relationships and careers. Importantly, all lessons signpost pupils to further support, information and advice. The programme will also allow exploration of social expectations and norms, school policies and procedures and the UK law. Prep is not usually set for PSHE but teachers have the ability to set prep if work has not been completed or in preparation for the next lesson.

We are acutely aware of issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia, and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled. PSHE education supports these school aims, together with staff modelling positive behaviours and school pastoral and behaviour policies.

We ensure PSHE (including RSE) is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and English as an Additional Language (EAL) by maintaining up to date pupil profiles to which staff refer when planning the delivery of lessons and working closely with the Lead SENDCO. Reasonable adjustments are made to alleviate any disadvantage when planning for PSHE.

We ensure PSHE (including RSE) fosters gender equality and LGBTQ+ equality by ensuring staff receive training and resources in these areas. Our teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. LGBTQ+ content is fully integrated into our programmes of study for this area of the curriculum

rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. Pupils will be made aware of the protected characteristics inline with the Equality Act 2010.

In line with the school SMSC policy, pupils will have an opportunity to express their own beliefs and perspectives as well as hearing those of others and to understand the school and wider consequence of their actions and behaviours. Fundamental British values will be explored both through explicit lessons but also throughout the curriculum implicitly.

### **Definitions:**

Relationships Education is part of the PSHE curriculum in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum, intended to provide what children and young people need to know about:

- how to be safe and healthy;
- how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way;
- the nature of marriage and civil partnership and their importance for family life and the bringing up of children;
- safety in forming and maintaining relationships;
- the characteristics of healthy and respectful relationships; and
- how relationships may affect physical and mental health and wellbeing.

The education provided is age appropriate and developmentally appropriate and is taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents, with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law and the information they need to make decisions.

Sex Education, as part of RSE, also includes:

- teaching about intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health;
- what the law says about sex, relationships and young people;
- broader safeguarding issues; and
- using technology.

There is some flexibility in the curriculum to allow the school to respond to any issues or educational concerns that may arise over the course of the year and are therefore subject to change based on global issues, critical incidents or whole school community issues and pupil need.

The year overview can be seen at Annex A. more details will be provided on request.

### **Timetabling**

The PSHE provision at Milton Abbey School is delivered to each pupil during a weekly lesson in small classes in their year group. The core curriculum is delivered via a thematic basis over the course of each half term (a module). Termly overviews are available from the Head of PSHE. There is some flexibility in delivery to allow the department to respond to any issues or educational concerns that may arise over the course of the year and are therefore subject to change based on global issues, critical incidents or whole school community issues and pupil need. It is expected that each module will comprise of 5-7 lessons.

Weekly lessons are supplemented by occasional assemblies and external speakers and by whole school activities following national events such as Anti-bullying week, Safer Internet Day, Pride month and Black History month.

### **Assessment and evaluation**

Assessment is central to effective teaching and learning. This is true for all subjects, and PSHE education is no exception. Effective assessment allows pupils and teachers to reflect on what has been learned, increases motivation for future learning and demonstrates impact.

Lessons include baseline assessments to gauge prior knowledge and understanding allowing the teacher to modify lessons appropriately. Formative assessment focusses on measuring progress for this baseline. End of topic assessments allow teachers to gauge individual and overall learning of the pupil body to see if topics or concepts need to be covered again. Where there is concern that a pupil has struggled to make sufficient progress or meet the target outcomes this will be highlighted to the Head of PSHE so they can ensure gaps are filled. If pupils struggle to access the curriculum, options will be discussed with the SENDCo. Small class sizes together with a small number of teachers, each teaching a year group, enable them to assess the class knowledge and amend lessons if required.

The curriculum is evaluated by teachers and Head of PSHE. Teachers keep an ongoing review of lessons and evidence of learning, including assessment results. Pupils will be asked via surveys and pupil voice to review PSHE topics and lessons. This feedback is used to amend both lesson topics and lesson content at the end of each year or sooner if required.

## **PSHE Education Teaching and Learning**

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are aligned with growth-mindset and learning to learn pedagogy. Emphasis is focused on developing habits to establish a safe and secure environment within which pupils can take risks and challenge and explore their understanding. Whilst any information presented/discussed may not be new, the consideration of this knowledge in a broader context is actively encouraged.

Pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning and personal development. This may involve activities such as: research tools/tasks, case studies, role play, film/documentaries/short videos, small/large discussion groups, the appropriate use of guest speakers, quizzes, project-based responses, and debates. We help students make connections between learning and real life by using case studies which is a useful method of distancing learning for pupils to prevent shock or shame. All case studies are reviewed and amended as necessary to make them relevant to our pupils. We promote help seeking by reviewing avenues of support inside and outside school, including online, at the end of each lesson or during care studies. Some research tasks also use accurate and up to date websites suitable for our pupils so they get experience of seeking help themselves. All videos are viewed by teachers to ensure they are suitable and age-appropriate. Ground rules are used to encourage respect of other people's views, opinions and value and these are upheld by the classroom teachers.

Staff are also aware that children may discuss topics including self-harm and suicide. In talking about this content in the classroom, teachers must be aware of the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable option for pupils and avoid material being instructive rather than preventative. To avoid this, they will take care to avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos, or images. If teachers have concerns about a specific pupil in relation to self-harm or suicidal ideation or attempts, they will follow safeguarding procedures.

Lessons have been developed centrally by the Head of PSHE. They are often based on programmes from the PSHE Association, of which the school is a member.

Pupils can earn academic rewards and be nominated for the weekly pupils of praise in the lower and upper schools in line with other academic subjects.

The use of external speakers and Visitors is covered earlier in this document.

### **Establishing a safe learning environment**

Ground rules are reviewed each lesson. An amended version of those from PSHE association has been used rather than having different versions for each class. Teachers will emphasise particular ground rules

that have relevance in each lesson. Pupils should expect to be treated respectfully by staff and other pupils. Personal or private stories should generally not be shared in the classroom environment. Pupils have a right to pass. This is particularly important because some pupils struggle if they are 'put on the spot' to answer questions. This information is available to teachers on the pupil profiles.

Learning materials are dyslexia friendly following the guidance that all academic staff follow as advised by our SENDCo. This includes presentation, videos and printed documents. The Head of PSHE informs teaching and boarding staff prior to each half term as to the topics to be covered for each year group. This will form the basis for discussions with House masters or mistresses about any pupils who due to their personal circumstances might find a particular classroom lesson difficult to attend. If necessary, pupils and parents will be consulted. Most learning materials have been amended from PSHE Association quality assured resources. As well as making them dyslexia friendly in many cases activities have been amended to allow for maturity of pupils and learning needs other than dyslexia. Consideration has been given to how case studies and scenarios are written to show a diverse range of characters so that as many pupils as possible can relate to them. Most lessons take part in a dedicated PSHE classroom.

Pupils and teaching and boarding staff will be notified about the content for each half term so that any SEND, EAL or pastoral issues can be discussed with pupils and/or parents to ensure that appropriate adjustments are made.

### **Responding to questions and managing disclosures**

Pupils and pastoral staff are made aware of the upcoming topics so that where relevant these can be discussed with pupils and parents where there is the change the lesson content may negatively impact the pupil. Occasionally, it may not be in a pupil's best interest to participate in a particular lesson.

Good practice allows children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. The ground rules which are reviewed each lesson remind pupils that personal and private issues should not be raised about themselves or others. Teachers will answer questions where they are able to. If they are unable to answer a question, teachers are aware they should park the question and then deal with the question outside the lesson.

If a pupil raises a question or says something of concern or makes a disclosure, teachers know they must report this to the safeguarding team immediately and school safeguarding procedures will be followed. PSHE teachers are generally experienced members of staff, often those who work pastorally with pupils, which is why they are chosen. A less experienced member of staff would be given extra support by the Head of PSHE.

If an anonymous question was raised during a lesson that was of concern, this would be reported to the safeguarding team for decision about appropriate action.

Teachers know they cannot offer complete confidentiality. Pupils and staff are aware of the level of confidentiality offered by the health centre staff (including counsellors). External visitors are made aware of school procedures on arrival if they have a concern. In any case, visitors would be accompanied unless they have gone through appropriate safeguarding checks.

It is recognised that discussion of some topics within the school could potentially lead to a greater number of disclosures. Teaching and Boarding staff are made aware of the topics that will be covered in the next half term in case this occurs.

## Annex A: Curriculum overview

<i>Form</i>	<i>Michaelmas 1</i>	<i>Michaelmas 2</i>	<i>Lent 1</i>	<i>Lent 2</i>	<i>Summer 1</i>	<i>Summer 2</i>
<i>Third</i>	Mental and Physical Health	Drugs education	Intimate relationships	Being safe online Careers introduction	Family relationships	The wider world
<i>Fourth</i>	Mental health	Addressing extremism and radicalisation	Healthy relationships	Exploring influence – Drugs and gangs education	The wider world	Careers and skills
<i>Fifth</i>	Wellbeing on and offline	Careers 16+ next steps	Families, parenthood and pregnancy	Relationships and abuse	Independent health choices	<i>No lessons due to exams</i>
<i>L6</i>	Mental health and emotional wellbeing	Diversity and inclusion	Respectful relationships Apprenticeship week	Drugs education	Readiness for work	<i>Futures Careers and Skills Week</i>
<i>M6</i>	Independent health choices	Building and maintaining relationships	Careers & skills Personal finance	Living independently	<i>No lessons due to assessments and exams</i>	<i>No lessons due to assessments and exams</i>