UNLOCKING POTENTIAL

LEVELLING THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC ARENA

RSHE POLICY

Mission Statement

The Levels School exists to provide a nurturing environment in which students with specific learning difficulties and co-occurring diagnoses can develop their self-esteem and aspire to be independent young adults who value the rights, responsibilities and rules that exist to promote and support their future welfare. Our approach toward establishing this ideology is predicated on trauma-informed practice and an obligation to develop the social skills required to build their future aspirational communities. We exist to help them find their level.

This policy covers all premises known as The Levels School.

Date of policy	June 2026
Next review date	September 2027
Frequency of policy review (annually, every two years)	Annually
Policy owner	Ben Bridger – DSL
Published policy	Yes ☒ No ☐
List of connected policies	Safeguarding, SMSC, PSHE, Equal Opportunities and Dignity at work Policy, Digital Use Policy, Relational, Curriculum Policy

Approved / Date	Approved by Governing body

The Board of Governors acknowledge their responsibility to ensure that this policy is effective and follows regulatory requirements. Governors undertake a review to satisfy themselves that the implementation of this policy is effective.

The Board of Governors ensures the establishment of familiarity with and the effective operation through monitoring, of school policies, approving those requiring GB sign-off in line with a regular cycle of school policy reviews. This occurs through a cycle of governor committee meetings and full board meetings.

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What is the aim of this policy?

To provide clear guidance for the Levels Schools' Staff, Governors and Parents on how the Relationships Education curriculum for KS2, and the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum for KS3 and 4 will be devised, delivered, monitored and reviewed. It will identify the importance of lifelong learning, statutory compliance, parental engagement, our curriculum and the SEND awareness required for our students.

Statutory compliance

This policy has been updated in line with the Department for Education statutory guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (July 2025), which will become mandatory from September 2026. It states that all schools must deliver relationships education at primary level and relationships and sex education (RSHE) at secondary level.

The Levels School policy has been written in line with that guidance, has been made available to our parents for initial perusal (June 2026) and has been supported in its development through the following guidance and legislation:

- Education Act (1996).
- Learning and Skills Act (2000).
- Education and Inspections Act (2006).
- Equality Act (2010).
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014).
- Sex & relationship education (SRE) for the 21st Century (PSHE Assoc. 2014).
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2025).
- Children and Social Work Act (2017).
- Relationships education, relationships and sex education (RSHE) and health education (2025).

Rationale for RSHE at The Levels School

Relationships Education, or Relationships, Sex and Health Education (identified as RSHE throughout this document), is delivered as an important part of the Levels Schools' PSHE curriculum that encompasses the students' needs for healthy living and safe working in the modern world.

The Levels School exists to provide a nurturing environment in which students with specific learning difficulties and co-occurring diagnoses can develop their self-esteem and aspire to be independent young adults who value the rights, responsibilities and rules that exist to promote and support their future welfare.

The Levels School recognises that parents and carers carry the expectation as prime educators for children on many of the areas covered in the RSHE curriculum and that we exist to compliment and reinforce our students' knowledge. However, we also recognise the neutral forum that a classroom can provide for our students to ask the questions that they need to have answered and will promote the inclusion of all our students in those crucial conversations, where possible.

Our RSHE curriculum is delivered in an age and developmentally appropriate manner, and is safeguarding-led and responsive to emerging risks in line with current Governmental guidelines. The RSHE curriculum reflects the Equality Act 2010, including teaching about protected characteristics such as sex, race, disability, religion, sexual orientation and gender reassignment. It also includes representation of diverse families and LGBTQ+ inclusion as standard, not optional.

Finally, we recognise that a well-rounded RSHE curriculum, in tandem with our PSHE curriculum, helps to create and underpin a culture of zero-tolerance for sexism, misogyny/misandry, homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and sexual violence or harassment.

RSHE at Key Stage 2

For our Key Stage 2 students, RSHE focuses on the importance of relationships in all their forms, supporting our students' understanding that their happiness, development and future welfare is based on building good relationships, and what those relationships can look like. It identifies the range of family styles present in the modern world and other places in our lives where we have important relationships and how those relationships should provide care, growth and support in developing future self and further healthy relationships.

The Key Stage 2 PSHE curriculum will be taught through a thematic model, with the Relationships module appearing in the Autumn term of each year. It is delivered across three themes; "Families and friendships", "Safe relationships" and "Respecting ourselves and others".

The "Families and friendships" module starts with family roles, caring, features of family life and positive friendships, and for the older cohort they investigate managing friendships and peer influence, along with romantic relationships, civil partnerships and marriage.

Our "Safe relationships" module investigates privacy and permission, personal boundaries and hurtful behaviour outcomes, feeling safe and recognizing and managing pressure and consent in different situations.

The "Respecting ourselves and others" module focuses on behavioural importance (respect and politeness), cooperative working and playing, respecting difference, recognising prejudice and discrimination and expressing opinion and respecting others' points of view.

Aside from the statutory content of the Science curriculum, which covers reproduction, development and growth, we know we will need to respond to individual students' questions around sex and sexuality when they arise. In these instances, the teacher will issue the class with a "Good Question" token to hold for the week. We will then, in consultation with parents, develop a response for the students, ideally within the week.

RSHE at Key Stage 3 & 4

At Key Stage 3 & 4 RSHE maintains its focus on relationships but introduces how sexuality plays a part in that experience. It also identifies the pressures of living in an online world and the period of physical and societal change all students go through during their teen years. It is designed to help them navigate these experiences safely, alongside relevant legal frameworks, and is delivered alongside a well-developed curriculum from Science, PE, ICT and Drama.

Taught through a Thematic based model that is designed to support our students Specific Learning Difficulties. The curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure that knowledge, skills and attitudes are built progressively over time in a developmentally appropriate way. This spiral curriculum model ensures that learning is reinforced, contextualised and made increasingly relevant to pupils lived experiences as they mature.

The curriculum addresses contemporary safeguarding risks, including misogyny, harmful gender stereotypes and violence against women and girls; the impact of pornography and harmful sexualised content; online harms, including exploitation, coercion, deepfakes, scams and financial manipulation; and personal safety in real-world contexts.

Pupils are taught to critically evaluate online content, including influencers and harmful narratives; online misogyny and extremist content; issues related to privacy, consent and the use of personal data; gaming-related risks, including monetisation and addictive design; and fraud, scams and financial exploitation.

The curriculum includes a clear focus on personal safety. Pupils are taught to recognise unsafe situations, understand risks in physical environments (including transport and water), and develop appropriate help-seeking behaviours, including identifying trusted adults.

Mental health and wellbeing education includes teaching about grief, loss and bereavement; loneliness and resilience; and the development of emotional literacy and effective help-seeking strategies.

RSHE is distributed throughout the academic year at an age-appropriate level to the year group. Each year group cover the following topics:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
Emotional wellbeing: managing change and transition	Health and wellbeing	Mental health and wellbeing	Independence, health choices and wellbeing	Life-long wellbeing
Friendships and bullying	Personal safety and managing risk	Drug education	Navigating the online world	Drugs and personal safety
Families and changing relationships	Belonging and community	Managing risk in relation to the law	Friendships, diversity and challenging extremism	Safe relationships and sexual health
Puberty and keeping safe	The online world	Intimate sexual relationships	Managing influence	Families, fertility and pregnancy
Influences on relationships	Healthy and unhealthy relationships	Navigating harms	Exploring consent and recognising abuse	Online financial harms

Where possible (specifically in KS4) we aim to bring students together regularly to discuss gender perspectives and attitudes on the topics discussed but will provide opportunities for single sex classes where we feel it would be supportive to the student's learning.

Content is carefully differentiated to ensure pupils with SEND are able to access, understand and apply RSHE knowledge safely in real life contexts. Adaptations may include collaboration with SALT, therapists and EHCP outcomes, smaller group teaching or 1:1 delivery where needed.

The curriculum is annually reviewed to reflect emerging local and national safeguarding trends.

At Post 16, RSHE has a focus on relationships through twice weekly sessions of Interpersonal Skills., which are led by a Speech and Language Therapist. Health and Wellbeing is taught through ASDAN modules as part of the Living Independently Short Course.

Monitoring, reporting and evaluating RSHE provision

Teachers will critically reflect on their work in delivering RSHE through providing students with feedback sessions where they peer review the completed module of work and define areas of strength in the lessons and areas for improvement. This response is then fed back into the planning to further develop the curriculum.

As building students' self-esteem is central to our pedagogy, pupils will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons via guided class discussions, group work and formalised debate.

RSHE will be assessed by using baseline assessments and using knowledge checks in the form of quizzes, discussion and reflection.

Safe and Effective RSHE Practice

We will ensure a safe learning environment through fostering classrooms built on trust and positive reinforcement, providing the students with a 'safe space' from which they can probe the topics they need to understand with confidence and support.

Teachers and pupils will agree ground rules at the start of every module of work, ensuring that every child's voice is heard, and miscommunication and misrepresentation of topics is mitigated.

Distancing techniques such as roleplay, media review/checks and buzz groups can help reduce the impact of personal perspectives and make the responses more considered and balanced which in turn helps produce more academic reflections.

All staff teaching RSHE will be supported through regular INSET, either from within the staff body or through external facilitators, keeping staff abreast of current good practice and any changes in legislation or guidance. e will ensure that parents are a part of our safe and effective practice through informing them when Relationships and Sex education will be taught, by informing them at the start of the term in which it will be delivered and inviting comment. Parents will be reminded they also have access to content of modules and school policies throughout the school year via the school's website and regular email of Curriculum Slides from which they can draw further information. The school actively support parents to engage with RSHE through consultation opportunities and accessible curriculum materials. Teaching materials can be available to parents on request.

Safeguarding

Teachers are made aware that effective RSHE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. As such, any staff who are expected to deliver RSHE as part of the PSHE curriculum will be confident in current safeguarding procedures, as delivered in training through INSET.

In the event of a disclosure from a child, Teachers will consult with the designated safeguarding lead and in their absence their deputy who will follow protocol. For further details please see our Safeguarding policy.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSHE will be required to provide DBS checks before attending the site, will be partnered with a member of teaching staff and will follow visitor protocol while on school grounds.

Parental right to withdraw (KS2 and KS3-4)

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education provided as part of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). The school will grant such requests up to three terms before the pupil turns 16, in line with statutory guidance.

Before responding to a request, the Headteacher (or delegated senior leader) will discuss the request with parents/carers to ensure they are fully informed about the content and purpose of the curriculum, and to clarify any concerns or misconceptions. The school will respect the parents' right to withdraw their child, except in exceptional circumstances where it is not appropriate to do so in line with statutory guidance.

If a pupil is withdrawn, the school will make appropriate alternative arrangements for their supervised education during the period of withdrawal. Parents will be offered access to materials to support discussions at home if they wish.

In line with statutory guidance, if a pupil who has been withdrawn from sex education requests to receive the teaching within three terms of their 16th birthday, the school will make arrangements for this to take place.

The school recognises the additional needs of pupils with SEND and will work closely with parents/carers to ensure that all decisions about participation in RSE are made in the best interests of the pupil, supporting their safety, understanding and wellbeing.

As sex education is not part of our KS2 Relationships curriculum, students will be able to participate in all sections of the planned curriculum. Should it become necessary, we will contact parents to highlight where questions around sex and sexuality have appeared and agree a route forward.

Policy review procedure (parental, pupil and staff)

This policy will be reviewed annually by all stakeholders (Governors, Staff and Parents), before the end of the Summer Term, in preparation for the following academic year. It will be disseminated for review at Governor's Board Meeting where student voice and module feedback from staff will be available to support review. Parents will be consulted on proposed changes before the start of the Autumn term of the following academic year.

Reviewed by – Ben Bridger 11.9.24

Reviewed by - Caroline Cook 06.09.2021
Reviewed by – Ben Bridger 04.10.24
Reviewed by – Ben Bridger 03.10.25
Reviewed by – Hayley Tuttle & Ben Bridger 03.06.26