Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy (Preparatory School)

1. Introduction and Aims

Manchester High School for Girls aims to provide a safe, friendly and supportive environment in which each pupil knows that they are valued equally as an individual and in which the pastoral, social and academic needs are met in an atmosphere of mutual respect, toleration and support.

This Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy is underpinned by the school values of respect for others, honesty and the development of caring relationships. It will uphold the standards of inclusivity, meet the needs of all our pupils and will be set within a broader base of the growth of self-esteem and responsibility for the consequences of one's behaviour.

The aim of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) at Manchester High School for Girls, is to give our pupils the information they need to help develop healthy, nurturing relationships. In a modern world which facilitates the search for knowledge effortlessly, we believe it is important for young minds to be adequately prepared and equipped with the skills to safely navigate the internet.

The RSE programme of study provided by Manchester High School for Girls, is intended to complement and support the role of parents in educating their children.

The intended outcome of our programme of study is that pupils will:

- Know and understand the positive effects of healthy and respectful relationships.
- Understand that they have a right to healthy and respectful relationships.
- Understand that they have a responsibility to make informed decisions about healthy and respectful relationships.
- Develop the skills of identifying when a relationship is not healthy and/or respectful.
- Develop the attributes to manage their relationships effectively.
- Develop an understanding of how babies are conceived, grow during pregnancy and are born.

2. Legislation and Guidance

Regulatory framework: This policy has been prepared to meet the School's responsibilities under:

- Children Act 1989
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014

- Education Act (1996)
- Education and Skills Act 2008
- Government consultation response (February 2019)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2026)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in schools (November 2014)
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (September 2014)
- Statutory guidance from the DfE Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (DfE, published June 2019 and revised July 2025 with implementation September 2026)
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Independent Schools Standards (April 2019)

3. Definitions and Terms Used in this Policy

The revised School for Education statutory guidance states that from September 2021 all schools must deliver relationships education (in Primary Schools) and must deliver Relationship and Sex Education (in Secondary Schools).

Relationships Education is the term used in reference to the **Preparatory** curriculum, with a focus on the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to 'Families and People who Care for Me'; 'Caring Friendships'; 'Respectful Relationships'; 'Online Relationships' and 'Being safe'. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education as it is compulsory in all primary schools.

Health Education: is the term used in reference to the aspect of the curriculum in the **Preparatory School,** which covers mental wellbeing, internet safety and harms, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, facts and risks associated with drugs, alcohol and tobacco, health and prevention, basic first aid and growth and changing body, including puberty. There is no right to withdraw from Health Education as it is compulsory in all primary schools. See separate PSHE Policy.

Sex Education: is the term used in the **Preparatory School** to describe two lessons delivered in Year 6 which cover the topics of conception, pregnancy and birth. Our aim is to educate our pupils about pregnancy and birth, in order to promote a better understanding of reproductive health and family life. We aim to dispel any misconceptions surrounding pregnancy and birth in order to prepare them for future discussions and to foster a positive attitude towards the natural process of childbirth. Parents are consulted prior to these lessons being taught, at which point they may make a request to the Head of the Preparatory School for their daughter to be excused from one or both of these lessons. Permission for this to happen will always be granted.

4. Consultation:

In the **Preparatory School** we recognise that parents need to have confidence in what their daughters are being taught in the classroom. We are, therefore, committed to fulfilling our responsibility to parents by letting them know what will be taught and when. Resources and materials are shared with parents at the annual Curriculum Evening in September to inform their decision-making and formal lines of communication as well as informal open consultations are arranged in the summer term prior to teaching lessons puberty and ahead of the optional Sex Education Lessons in Year 6.

The RSE policy and curriculum have been produced in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education, with input from staff and in consultation with parents, via a survey and parent forums. Manchester High School for Girls is committed to working collaboratively with parents, building on what pupils learn at home. This policy and the RSE curriculum reflect our school's context and diverse nature as well as recognising that the role of educating every girl is a partnership between home and school.

We aim to always deliver content in a sensitive, objective and balanced manner to enable girls to comprehend the range of social attitudes and behaviour in modern-day society. This will empower them to consider their own attitudes and actions and make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions while they are at school, at home and in adult life. Moving forwards, pupil voice will be used to review and tailor the Relationship and Sex Education programme.

5. Curriculum Content and Delivery

Relationships and Health Education in the Preparatory School at Manchester High School for Girls is taught by teachers from the Preparatory School and is underpinned by a wider cultivation and practice of resilience and growth of the character of the individual. Pupils will be encouraged to develop their personal traits of honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generously, trustworthiness and a sense of justice. This will be encompassed in an enhancement of self-respect and self-worth.

Pupils will be taught about family relationships and friendships, as part of becoming a successful and happy adult. Pupils will be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing. Internet safety will be addressed regularly across the programme of study. Pupils will be taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact and how to report issues and to whom. Pupils will be taught how data is collected and shared.

The RSE curriculum is embedded within the PSHE curriculum to support young people with their emotional, physical and moral development, helping young people learn to respect themselves and others, and move with confidence from childhood, to adolescence to adulthood. The different elements of RSE are interdependent and age appropriate to build positive and safe relationships in order to thrive in modern Britain, under the following RSE themes:

- Healthy, Caring and Respectful Relationships (families and friends)
- Health and Wellbeing
- Keeping Safe
- Growing and Changing
- Living in the Wider World
- My Future Self (developing self-esteem, confidence and independence)
- Online / Digital Safety

RSE topics fall under all of these themes and are taught within the PSHE curriculum but may also be covered across the curriculum in assemblies or subjects such as Science.

Teaching methods include:

- Discussion, including ground rules outlining the manner in which lessons operate.
- Individual, paired and group work, generating and sharing ideas and understanding. Such discourse will be stimulated by watching/reading relevant material and exploring the information presented by teachers.

In the **Preparatory School,** Sex Education lessons build on the teaching covered in Years 4, 5 and 6 which includes learning about both the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty. Pupils will learn in a factual and age-appropriate way, about the biology of conception and how the baby develops in the womb and is born.

6. Governor Roles and Responsibilities:

The Board of Governors have overall responsibility for all matters which are the subject of the Relationship and Sex Education policy including the approval of this policy.

The Board of Governors are required to ensure that all those in school with leadership and management responsibilities, actively promote the heathy wellbeing of pupils. The adoption of this policy is part of the Board of Governors' response to this duty.

The Board of Governors will ensure that this policy is kept up to date, in line with the law and best practice.

7. School Roles and Responsibilities:

Policy: Manchester High School for Girls has a legal responsibility to generate an up-to-date Relationships and Sex Education Policy which is available to parents. This policy will describe how relationships and sex education will be delivered throughout the curriculum, who will deliver the curriculum and information about the 'right to withdraw'. The school will also communicate to parents when relationships and sex education will be delivered in each year group.

Review: The Relationships and Sex Education Policy will be reviewed at least every three years by the Head of Preparatory School to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the pupils, staff and parents and that it is in line with the current School for Education advice and guidance.

Any review of the programme will include an opportunity for the views of parents to be considered.

Resources: Manchester High School for Girls will ensure that all materials used in school for the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education will be in accordance with the law. Inappropriate images will not be used, nor any explicit material not directly related to an explanation. All materials will be evaluated to ensure that they are age appropriate, including material from outside providers.

Pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND): Relationships and Sex Education will be accessible for all pupils. Manchester High School for Girls will ensure that this teaching will be differentiated and personalised. The School is aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND and will take this into consideration when preparing materials and resources that the needs of all pupils are met.

The right to withdraw from Sex Education Lessons:

There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education in the Preparatory School. However, parents have the right to request permission for their daughter/s to be withdrawn from all or part of two lessons in Year 6, during which pupils learn how a baby is conceived and develops. Whilst parents will be invited to discuss their concerns, permission will always be granted. Please see Appendix B.

8. Parental Roles and Responsibilities:

Manchester High School for Girls recognises that parents play a vital role in teaching their children about Relationships and Sex Education, through maintaining the culture and ethos of the family, helping their children to navigate the physical and emotional challenges of growing up and empowering them with the confidence to manage the decisions they will face.

The School will consult with parents and carers in the development and review of this policy and on the content of our Relationship and Health Education programme. (See 4. Consultation Page: 3)

Right to withdraw: Parents do not have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from any aspect of Relationships or Health Education delivered as part of statutory RSE, or Science curriculum focusing on the biological aspects of growth and reproduction; however, parents do have the right to request to withdraw their child from any Sex Education taught in the Preparatory School as part of the RSE curriculum.

The School will make alternative arrangements for pupils in each case so that they receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

9. Teacher Roles and Responsibilities:

Pupils have a right to expect School to provide a safe and secure environment at all times. Teachers have a responsibility therefore to generate such an environment always, including during the teaching of Relationships and Sex Education.

Teachers have a responsibility to understand that effective Relationship and Sex Education must bring about an understanding of what is and is not acceptable in a relationship. This can lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. As such, teachers have a responsibility to make it clear to pupils that they cannot guarantee confidentiality and will need to share any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, in line with the Child Protection Policy.

All teachers and those contributing to Relationship and Sex Education from an external agency are expected to work within the agreed values framework as outlined in this policy, which is in line with current legislation. Personal values and beliefs must not influence the teaching of Relationship and Sex Education.

Teachers and guest speakers have a responsibility not to answer any misdirected questions which they feel could be inappropriate for the while class. In this instance the individual will be directed to an appropriate person, e.g. the School Nurse and report the incident to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. A teacher and guest speaker will not answer a question of a personal nature when teaching Relationship and Sex Education and should such a question be asked, remind the pupil of the ground rules, which will have been set before the lesson commences.

10. Pupil Roles and Responsibilities:

Pupils have a responsibility to respect the learning environment of the classroom, to ensure that their behaviour does not make someone else feel uncomfortable and must always help generate an environment of mutual repeat.

When in class, pupils have a responsibility to engage fully in the process of learning with regards to Relationship and Sex Education and not to ask questions of a personal nature.

11: Safeguarding, Reports of Abuse and Confidentiality

The School will follow Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) and will ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online. Pupils will also be made aware of how to raise concerns**.**

The School will ensure that the principles and guidance outlined in the Manchester High School for Girls policy for Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy are upheld at all times.

Where the school invites external agencies to support the delivery of Relationship and Sex Education, the School will agree in advance of the session, how a safeguarding disclosure will be dealt with by the external visitor.

12. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The Head of the Preparatory School and Science Subject Leader, will ensure that:

1. All schemes of work are reviewed on a regular basis to assess the content. Equally, that everything defined within the policy is accurate, age appropriate, factual and informative and conforms to current guidance.

2. All staff delivering this curriculum will be familiar with this policy and ensure that delivery conforms to the guidelines set down in the policy and its appendices and highlight any training needs.

3. Year 6 Parents are kept fully informed about timings and content so they can make informed decisions about whether to request to withdraw their child or not.

Appendix A: Preparatory School RSE Scheme of Work

The Preparatory School follow the Kapow Scheme of Work for RSE and PSHE
Lessons are delivered weekly throughout the academic year.

Reception (EYFS)		
Self-regulation	**Building Relationships**	**Managing Self**
Identifying my feelings Coping strategies Emotional Adjectives Facial Expressions	Special people Sharing I am unique Similarities and differences Festivals Sharing What makes a good friend Being a good friend	Why do we have rules Building towers Team races What is exercise Being a safe pedestrian Eating healthily

Year 1		
Family and Relationships	**Health and Wellbeing**	**Safety and the Changing Body**
What is family? What are friendships? Friendship Problems Healthy Friendships Gender stereotypes	Understanding emotions Ready for bed Handwashing and personal hygiene Sun safety Allergies	Adults in school Adults outside of school Making an emergency phone call Appropriate contact Safety and substances
Year 2		
Family and Relationships	**Health and Wellbeing**	**Safety and the Changing Body**
Families are all different Unhappy friendships Introduction to manners and courtesy Change and Loss Gender stereotypes Careers and jobs	Experiencing different emotions Developing a growth mindset Healthy diet Looking after our teeth	Communication online Secrets and surprises Appropriate contact Staying safe with medicine
Year 3		
Family and Relationships	**Health and Wellbeing**	**Safety and the Changing Body**
Healthy families Friendship conflicts vs bullying Learning who to trust Respecting differences in others Stereotyping gender	My healthy diary Wonderful me Resilience – breaking down barriers Diet and dental health	First-aid emergencies and calling for help Cyberbullying Influences Keeping safe out and about
Year 4		
Family and Relationships	**Health and Wellbeing**	**Safety and the Changing Body**
Respect and manners Healthy friendships Bullying Disability Changes and loss	Looking after our teeth Celebrating mistakes My happiness Emotions Mental health	Internet safety – Age restrictions Share aware Privacy and Security Tobacco How will my body change as I grow up? (Puberty and menstruation)

Year 5		
Family and Relationships	**Health and Wellbeing**	**Safety and the Changing Body**
Friendship skills Marriage Respecting myself Family life Bullying Race and religion	The importance of rest Taking responsibility for my feelings Healthy meals Sun safety	Online friendships Staying safe online Puberty Menstruation First-aid: Bleeding Alcohol, drugs and tobacco: Making decisions
Year 6		
Family and Relationships	**Health and Wellbeing**	**Safety and the Changing Body**
Respect Respectful Relationships Challenging stereotypes Resolving conflict Change and Loss	Taking responsibility for my health The impact of technology on health Resilience toolkit Immunisation Physical health concerns	Alcohol Social media Physical and emotional changes of puberty First aid – basic life support *Knowing how a baby is conceived and develops
		*This topic is covered in two lessons at the end of Year 6. Parents have the right to withdraw their daughter from one or both of these lessons if they wish.

Appendix B

Dear Parent/Guardian,

As part of our RSE (Relationship and Sex Education) curriculum in **Year 6,** we will be talking to the girls about conception, pregnancy and birth, towards the end of this term.

In order for you to consider whether you would like your daughter to be part of these lessons or not, we are making the resources we intend to use available to view in a Teams meeting on **XXXXXXXXX.** The details for the Microsoft Teams Meeting are:

Meeting ID:

Alternatively, you can access using this link.

I have also outlined below the learning objectives for each lesson together with key terminology that your daughters will learn about.
Lesson 1: In this lesson pupils will learn the biology of conception. They will be reminded of prior learning on menstruation and the following vocabulary will be explained:

- Egg
- Fertilization
- Puberty
- Ovary (Ovulation)
- Sperm
- Fallopian Tube
- Pregnant
- Sexual intercourse
- Penis
- Vagina
- Ejaculation
- Erection
- Cervix
- Womb

Lesson 2: Pupils will be taught about the development of the baby during pregnancy. In addition to the vocabulary taught in Lesson 1, they will also learn the following terminology:

- Egg cells
- Embryo
- Foetus
- Amniotic fluid
- Umbilical cord

XXXXXXXX will lead the sessions with their own classes. As both of these lessons constitute sex education as defined by the DfE, you may decide that you do not want your daughter to take part. Please indicate your preference this on the slip below. Once we know the numbers of girls involved, we will be in touch again to explain the arrangements for those pupils not taking part. For those participating, Lesson 1 and 2 will take place, one after the other, on the afternoon of **XXXXXXXX.** Those girls taking part in the lessons will be made aware of this on **XXXXXXX** so that they can ask questions anonymously, if they wish, using the class 'Ask-it-basket'. These will be dealt with sensitively either within the lesson itself, or as individuals, determined by **XXXXXXXX.**
If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to get in touch with **XXXXXXX** or myself.
Yours sincerely,

Mrs S Gibbons
Head of the Preparatory School

Pupil name:_____

Please delete as appropriate.
I DO/DO NOT give permission for my daughter to take part in Lesson 1 (The biology of conception) of the sex-education lessons as detailed in the letter.

I DO/DO NOT give permission for my daughter to take part in Lesson 2 (The developing foetus) of the sex-education lessons as detailed in the letter.

Parent/Guardian signature_____
Date_____