

Mapledown School



Working and Learning Together

RSHE POLICY

This policy was drafted on	12th April 2022
The Designated Safeguarding Leads are	Sandra Chaaya - Headteacher Caroline Garvey - Deputy Head Charlotte Abley - Assistant Head Michaela Pogue - Assistant Head
This policy was ratified on	14th November 2022
The policy was reviewed in	April 2023 October 2024
The policy is to be reviewed in	September 2026
Should a serious incident take place, the following external persons/agencies should be informed	0-25 Children with Disability Service LADO if it concerns an adult's behaviour, police will be informed

Date policy last reviewed: 4 October 2024

Signed by:

_____ Headteacher Date: _____

_____ Chair of governors Date: _____

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following, which all staff have read:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Behaviour policy
- Equal Opportunities policy
- Personal Development - PSHE and RSHE curriculum documents
- Visitor policy
- Personal care policy

Scope of this policy

The RSE Policy forms part of the overall PSHE and Citizenship Policy. This policy applies to all members of the school community (including staff, students/pupils, volunteers, parents/carers, visitors).

It was amended in response from the DfE' Sex and Relationship Education guidance for schools (2000), Section 80A of the Education Act 2002, followed by further amendments to reflect updated legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, Sex and Relationships Guidance to Schools (2010), National Curriculum (2014), **DfE Policy Statement on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and PSHE Education** (1 March 2017), *Children and Social Work Act* (2017), and the *DfE Draft statutory guidance, The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (England, 2019), September 2021.

Introduction

Mapledown School is a mixed special day school for pupils with severe and profound and complex learning difficulties aged 11-19.

This relationships, sex and health education policy (RSHE) explains the aims of RSHE within Personal, social, health, economic education and citizenship (PSHEE&C). It also describes what we teach and which approaches we use.

This policy helps to ensure that the whole school community (parents, staff, governors and pupils) have a shared understanding of this important area of the curriculum. It was further developed after consultation with staff, governors and parents (2021).

Relationships Education, Sex Education and Health Education (referred to in this policy as RHE/ RHSE) are compulsory school subjects that help children and young people to understand the emotional, physical and social aspects of growing up and relationships. RHE involves lifelong learning, starting early in childhood and continuing throughout life. It is taught in every year group in the school in a way that reflects the learners' developmental level. RHE and RHSE will be taught either through direct experiences in real times, discretely or using defined units to support children's knowledge and understanding. High-quality teaching is differentiated, personalised and accessible to meet the needs of pupils (as referenced in the RSE government guidelines).

We recognise that within Special Educational settings:

- Schools should be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE can also be particularly important subjects for some pupils; for example, those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects.
- In special schools there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages. As with all teaching for these subjects, schools should ensure that their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered regarding the law. (Taken from RSE government guidelines)

1. Aims and Objectives

The over-arching aim of RHE and RHSE is to assist children and young people in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to become healthy, happy, safe, confident, respectful and responsible citizens – both now and in the future. The curriculum is in place to provide accurate, honest, and easy-to understand information at our learners' level of development (including the law related to topics such as consent, marriage and civil partnership, equality, child protection and safeguarding).

RSHE is the lifelong learning about physical, sexual, health, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. We emphasise the value of behaviour that promotes self-respect, respect for others and ensures a happy and safe learning environment. We strive to develop an ethos in which each person is respected and valued whatever their gender, class, race, disability, age, sexual identity. We aim to reflect this in this RSHE policy.

At Mapledown School, we understand that pupils must be provided with an education that prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. A key part of this relates to relationships and health education, which must be delivered to every pupil of secondary age.

Relationships education focuses on giving pupils the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships, and to build their self-efficacy. Health education focuses on equipping pupils with the knowledge they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. RSHE provides learning opportunities about the functions of our bodies and the nature of sexuality and relationships.

We understand our responsibility to deliver a high-quality, age-appropriate and evidence-based relationships, sex and health curriculum for all our pupils. This policy sets out the framework for our relationships and health curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered.

RSHE has main elements enabling pupils to:

1. Explore their own and other people's attitudes and values, developing a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour, including their personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, justice, self-respect and self-worth.
2. Develop and practise personal and social skills, understanding the consequence of their actions,
3. learning to behave responsibly within all relationships
4. Increase their knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe and develop healthy and
5. supportive relationships

Depending on pupil needs and the curriculum pathway they are accessing, the following range of topics are delivered:

Pre-formal Pathway

- Relationships and emotional regulations
- Personal care and independence

Semi-formal Pathway

- Emotional Regulation
- Building Relationships
- Independent Living & Personal Care
- Personal Hygiene
- Practices and Lifestyles

Formal Pathway

- Emotional Regulation & Wellbeing
- Friendships
- Independent living including choice around appearance
- Independent living - staying safe
- Puberty and growing up
- Living in the Wider World (Diversity, Power & Democracy)
- Practices & Lifestyles/Beliefs & Teachings

Reaching higher Pathway

- Emotional Regulation & Wellbeing
- Friendships
- Independent living including choice around appearance
- Independent living - staying safe
- Puberty and growing up
- Living in the Wider World (Diversity, Power & Democracy)
- Practices & Lifestyles/Beliefs & Teachings

2. Methodology

At Mapledown school we aim to empower our pupils with dignity and self-reliance.

We know that positive, caring environments are essential for our pupils to develop a good self-image. RSHE helps us teach the pupils that as individuals we each own our own bodies and that we are in charge of our own bodies.

RSHE is lifelong learning about personal, physical, moral and emotional development. It should teach children and young people to develop and form positive values, attitudes, personal and social skills, and increase their knowledge and understanding of how to make informed decisions and life choices.

RSHE provides learning opportunities about the functions of our bodies and the nature of sexuality and relationships. It encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes that allow pupils to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner. It is important that RSHE is taught within a framework which encourages pupils to have due regard to moral consideration and family life.

We build upon self-care routines during puberty and so that children learn appropriate strategies in coping with the changes to their bodies. Sex Education is taught on an individual basis, tailoring the information given to the children to meet their needs in a format suitable for their needs.

Our aims are that children will:

- learn to look after themselves both emotionally and physically
- gain an understanding of what it means to grow up and the changes their bodies will go through
- develop self-awareness and an understanding of their own body
- make sense of their feelings
- build self-esteem, assertiveness and, as a result, become less vulnerable
- explore friendships and relationships and enhance awareness of emotions and feelings
- develop the ability to make informed personal choices; gain the knowledge, social skills and attitudes and values relating to sex education to participate in society
- demonstrate respect for other cultures and view-points

At Mapledown, we ensure RHE and RHSE is compliant with the Equality Act 2010 and supports our fulfilment of the Public Sector Equality Duty, which requires schools to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination and other conduct that is prohibited by the Act
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
- Foster good relations across all characteristics - between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

3. Teaching and Learning

Each class teacher is responsible for planning and crafting learning that caters to individual needs and skills. Progression frameworks within RHE and RHSE provide relevant and sequenced learning to support teachers to provide coherent and planned sessions.

For those working at an Early Development level (pre-formal and semi-formal curriculum), RHE and RHSE learning takes place through a range of self-care and personalised learning opportunities, through direct experiences in real time, across the curriculum with a focus on body awareness, building relationships and developing physical and emotional well-being and working on core communication goals to support them to have autonomy within their relationships.

The aims of Relationships, Sex and Health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Provide a consistent standard of relations, sex and health education across the school
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Promote responsible behaviour and develop moral understanding
- Create a positive culture of communication around issues of relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for change, physically and emotionally
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach pupils about appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- To provide all pupils with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will enable them to make positive and healthy choices concerning relationships as they grow up and deal with risk.
- Develop respect for others

- Encourage pupils to make positive choices
- Help pupils to develop healthy relationships within a moral framework
- Help pupils understand how relationships are formed, maintained and sometimes ended
- Help pupils to understand emotions and feelings
- Develop an awareness of family life and the responsibilities of parenthood
- Develop an understanding and acceptance of diversity
- Combat exploitation by helping pupils to stay safe

4. Moral and Value Framework

Effective RHE and RHSE achieve a balance between the acquisition of:

- Attitudes – appreciation of difference, tolerance, and openness.
- Skills – communication, assertiveness, care for self and others, personal skills, managing emotions and relationships, problem-solving skills and decision-making skills.
- Knowledge – emotions and relationships; puberty; and health.

5. Content

The teaching of RHE and RHSE meets the requirements of the statutory elements of the National Curriculum, relating to: Science (Sex Education); Relationships Education and Health Education.

Where appropriate, RSHE is integrated into the whole curriculum and is not necessarily taught as a discrete subject. It is taught by the class teacher and reinforced by all members of the team. Teaching in the “here and now” is recognised as essential as many of our pupils have difficulties generalising learning that is out of context.

In classes accessing our formal curriculum, where appropriate, RSHE can be taught in discrete sessions. Discrete sessions may take the form of small groups (mixed groups of pupils from different classes) or in class sessions.

Appropriate methods of teaching RSHE (personalised to meet the pupils needs) use activities that encourage discussion (supported by individual pupils' communication systems). Real objects are used to demonstrate (e.g. spraying deodorant when looking at their growing bodies).

Most RSHE lessons are taught in class groups except for classes accessing the formal curriculum, which are taught as single sex groups for some of the topics covered.

We respect the religious and cultural beliefs of our pupils and staff. A very small number of our pupils may be taught about sexual relationships and contraception. If it is appropriate to teach this aspect of RSHE, parents are informed before the pupils are taught. Parents can withdraw their child from the session. Questions about contraception and sexual relationships are answered accurately and honestly within the pupil's ability to understand. If pupils require further advice about contraception, then counselling and support can be sought from appropriate agencies such as Respond and Brooke.

Teachers consider the individual learning needs of the pupils when answering questions and addressing their needs.

Staff are mindful that they must ensure pupils are aware that while some issues can be kept private they may need to pass on some information if the pupil is considered at risk. They are aware that if discussions or behaviours raise issues of concern for a particular pupil, they should follow the school's child protection procedures.

The new National Curriculum for Secondary Schools states that all schools should make provision for RSHE. The key skills that underpin RSHE education and help schools fulfil their statutory responsibility, is a curriculum that supports pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development and prepares them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life. The Education Act 2011 states:

'We recognise and applaud the important and valued role schools have always played in supporting the wider health and wellbeing of every child in their care. Responsibility for a

pupil's wider well-being involves carefully considered action to address the needs and specific challenges faced by each child or young person as an individual. Good schools work for the best interests and wider outcomes of children and young people as part of their core educational mission'

The knowledge, skills and attitudes/values are taught within the following Strands:

- Safe and respectful relationships, including friendships
- Relationships including sexual health and family composition
- Being safe in the world and through digital media
- Looking after our changing bodies
- Health and prevention, physical health and fitness and basic first aid
- Mental health and well-being, drugs and alcohol

A core element of RSHE is about understanding and managing our mental health and well-being. Throughout the curriculum, pupils are taught about managing feelings and developing positive attributes, such as self confidence and self-regulation.

The DfE guidance key skills for RSHE incorporated in and adapted for our curriculum are:

By the end of Secondary	
Themes	Pupils should learn
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● That there are different types of committed, stable relationships. ● How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship. ● Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. ● How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). ● That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. ● About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. ● What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. ● The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. ● About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. ● Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. ● What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. ● The impact of viewing harmful content.
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. ● How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others,

	including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship. • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • The facts about reproductive health. • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressuring others. • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available. • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help). • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing. • About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour. • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

This informs Mapledown school's long term plans for RSHE which are as follows:

Pathways	Themes
Pre-formal & Semi-formal	Puberty - my changing body (gender identification/identity) Public and private behaviours - keeping ourselves safe Personal care and hygiene (including menstruation) Managing feelings and behaviours (awareness and coping) Relationships – myself and others, families and friends
Formal	Changes Public and private behaviours - keeping ourselves safe Relationships – sex education within a context of loving, established relationships (if appropriate) Reproduction - as appropriate (science context, animal and human) Making safe choices - relationships Making safe choices - health and nutrition
Reaching higher	Body changes - puberty and personal hygiene. Public and private behaviours - keeping ourselves safe. Understanding bodily needs (menstruation, wet dreams, arousal, masturbation and dignity) Preparing for adulthood Consent and assertiveness - learning to keep safe. Health (sexual choices, testicular and breast cancer awareness)

6. Guidelines for Staff

- treat every pupil as an individual, with dignity and respect
- reinforce the concepts of "private" and "public" to activities, behaviour and situations, as well as teaching consent through "yes"/"no" responses
- use only the correct names for body parts
- a staff member should inform a designated safeguarding lead if they are concerned, a pupil is at risk of sexual abuse, and the usual child protection procedures followed.

7. Parental Engagement

Parents and Carers cannot withdraw children from Relationships Education or Health Education in primary or secondary education. All children and young people learn about safe and healthy relationships, including online safety, and it is vitally important to any young person's development.

Parents may request to withdraw their children from any aspects of Sex Education that are additional to that covered by the science curriculum, which is mandatory. They may ask to do this at any point, up to three terms before the child turns 16. Young people over this age, who wish to take part in the lessons, can do so.

If a parent/carer requests to withdraw their child from Sex Education, the school must talk their request through with them. Any parent/carer wishing to use the right to withdraw should always be directed to meet with the Headteacher. This must happen so that parents/carers can understand:

- what their child would be learning and why
- what aspects they can and cannot be withdrawn from
- what the risks are to the child of withdrawing them from the lessons (loss of learning, personal and social development, risk to safeguarding).

An open and honest discussion between parents/carers and the school can help dispel any misunderstandings or concerns that the parents/carers might have.

Parents and carers have an especially important role to play in RSHE; they need to feel confident that Mapledown's programme complements and supports their role. To enable this, an information session for parents may be held to discuss the RSHE programme, teaching resources shown and opportunities are given for discussion and questions. Letters are also sent home to inform parents and carers when a new RSHE topic is due to be taught in class, and class teachers ensure they are available to answer any queries from parents and carers. We also run termly workshops for parents where we discuss the need for teaching RSHE in school, potential puberty and growing up parents may have, and to share our curriculum and resources.

Pupils are encouraged to communicate their concerns and problems with parents/carers where appropriate.

8. Roles and responsibilities

A whole-school approach is involved in our delivery of Sex and Relationship Education. All stakeholders of the school community have rights and responsibilities regarding Sex and Relationship Education. In particular:

- **The Headteacher** is responsible for ensuring that RHE and RHSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE. The headteacher is responsible for:
 - The overall implementation and monitoring of this policy
 - Ensuring that staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects,
 - Ensuring parents are fully informed of the policy
 - Reviewing requests from parents to withdraw their children from certain topics.
 - Discussing requests for withdrawal with parents.
 - Organising alternative education for pupils, where necessary, that is appropriate and purposeful
 - Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy
 - Reviewing it every 2 years.
- **The Senior Leadership Team** supports the provision and development of Sex and Relationship Education in line with this policy by providing leadership and adequate resources:
 - Overseeing the delivery of the subjects.
 - Ensuring the subjects are age-appropriate and high-quality.
 - Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the subjects.

- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to the relationships, sex and health curriculum.
- Ensuring the relationships, sex and health curriculum is inclusive, relevant and accessible for all pupils.
- Working with other subject leaders to ensure the relationships, sex and health curriculum complements, but does not duplicate, the content covered in the school curriculum.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the subjects and providing reports to the headteacher
- **The Assistant Head** with responsibility for curriculum will maintain an overview of Sex and Relationship Education provision and have overall responsibility for its development.
- **Teachers** are involved in the school's Sex and Relationship Education provision by providing bespoke and personalised sessions to individuals/groups following the school's curriculum. Teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. Teachers will be consulted about the school's approach to Sex and Relationship Education and aided in their work by providing resources, background information, support and advice from experienced members of staff and access to appropriate training. In addition to catering for varied learning needs and learning styles, teachers will:
 - Establish ground rules with the pupils (no one will have to answer personal questions, be forced to take part in discussion, only the correct names of body parts will be used and the meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way).
 - Know how to deal with unexpected questions or comments from pupils, or seek advice if unsure.
 - Use discussion and appropriate materials.
 - Encourage reflection.
 - Consider the cultural and religious background of all pupils
 - Ensure teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. The school will seek to complement the role of parents
 - Use a variety of teaching methods and resources to provide an engaging curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils.
- **Support staff** will be involved in some Sex and Relationship Education lessons and play an important, informal pastoral support role. Staff are required to be good role models particularly in relation to how they interact with their colleagues and peers. They need to be aware of the boundaries between student/buddy relationships. Staff should use teaching methods to stimulate the pupils' interest and encourage their full participation such as drama/role play/interactive activities and social stories to deliver key messages and learning related to RSHE. They should also use a range of 'real' objects and real anatomically correct fabric models when necessary
- **Governors** have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RHSE provision and policy. They are responsible for:
 - Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes for RSHE.
 - Ensuring the RSHE curriculum is well led, effectively managed and well planned.
 - Evaluating the quality of RSHE provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
 - Ensuring teaching of RSHe is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils with SEND.
 - Providing clear information for parents on subject content and their rights to request that their children are withdrawn from the teaching of Sex Education.
 - Making sure the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- **Parents/Carers** have a right to view this policy and to have information about the school's Sex and Relationship Education provision. Sex and Relationship Education, which falls outside ongoing work in self-care and social skills or science topics, will be discussed with parents to know what we are covering and how we are teaching it.

Pupils have an entitlement to age and circumstance appropriate Sex and Relationship Education. Where appropriate they will be consulted about their Sex and Relationship Education needs, and their views will be central to developing the provision.

9. RHE, RHSE and Safeguarding

Effective RHE is a necessary and vital part of safeguarding children and meeting safeguarding obligations. It can equip pupils with the facts and skills to negotiate all forms of relationships and recognise what is positive in a relationship and what is not.

The 2024 DfE Statutory guidance 'Keeping children safe in education' states schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including online. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, states maintained schools should safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. Our RSHE plays a vital role in informing children about appropriate physical and emotional contact with others and provides a framework within which they can make judgements about their own safety.

To help safeguard pupils, RHE at Maplewood follows the principles for effective RHE set out by organisations such as the NSPCC, The Children's Society, The National Children's Bureau, the Sex Education Forum and Barnardo's. These principles state that effective RHE:

- Promotes safe, equal, caring and enjoyable relationships and discusses real-life issues appropriate to the age and stage of pupils, including friendships, families, consent, relationship abuse, sexual exploitation and safe relationships online.
- Is based on reliable sources of information, including about the law and legal rights, and distinguishes between fact and opinion.
- Includes learning about how to get help and treatment from sources such as the school nurse and other health and advice services, including reliable information online.
- Works in partnership with parents and carers, informing them about what their children will be learning and about how they can contribute at home.

10. Consent

For children under the age of 16 the concept of consent and developing an understanding of 'yes and no' will be covered in the areas of caring and respectful friendships and relationships where appropriate for the child.

For young people of 16 years there are further considerations around decision making and consent as they enter adulthood. When exploring consent in RHSE at secondary we must consider their capacity to consent to something.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 is a law that protects vulnerable people over the age of 16 around decision-making. It says that:

Every adult, whatever their disability, has the right to make their own decisions wherever possible.

People should always support a person to make their own decisions if they can. This might mean giving them information in a format that they can understand (for example this might be easy read information for a person with a learning disability) or explaining something in a different way.

But if a decision is too big or complicated for a person to make, even with appropriate information and support, then people supporting them must make a 'best interests' decision for them

At Maplewood, once a young person is 16 years old we will always seek guidance around capacity/decision making of that young person from them, their parents and other professionals involved with the young person to ensure a person centred approach to planning RHSE support.

For more information and guidance around supporting a young person who is 16 years and above with a learning difficulty please follow the links below to Mencap

[Learning disability Sex and Relationship research](#)
[Relationships and Learning Disability](#)

11. RHE, RHSE and Faith Perspectives

Pupils of all faiths and those of no faith are treated equally and respectfully. In line with the DfE statutory guidance, RHE is taught in a way that respects all views and which takes the backgrounds of the pupils into account. Primarily, RHE is a subject dedicated to building pupil's empathy, self-worth, respect and values. Faith perspectives are included in the teaching and learning, where appropriate (e.g. when discussing marriage or contraception). However, RHE is always taught within the context of the Equality Act 2010 and the school places RHSE at the forefront of its Public Sector Equality Duty to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.
- Foster good relations across all protected characteristics – between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

12. RSHE, Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

The RSHE curriculum has been developed to take into account the diversity of the school population and to meet the needs of the pupils at Mapledown. The teaching materials we use are regularly reviewed to ensure their suitability.

13. Working with the wider Community

We work with Health Professionals via our school nursing team and paediatricians where necessary. Where applicable, we also work with social workers to ensure the safety of our pupils is at the forefront of our work.

14. Confidentiality

Teachers understand that they cannot offer or guarantee confidentiality to pupils seeking advice on matters relating to sexual relations because of the vulnerability of our pupils. The school recognises that because the role of parents and carers is central, they must be informed of any matter regarding the pupil's sexual health, including any sexualised behaviours that occur at school despite this being normal activity for pupils during the various stages of puberty.

It is only in exceptional circumstances that the school would handle information without parental knowledge. In these circumstances, it is likely that the school's child protection procedures would be followed. The school has clear guidelines for child protection. Staff should be aware of the signs of abuse and know to whom they should report their concerns or suspicions. Staff receive training and regular updates on the school's child protection procedures.

15. Other related policies

This policy has clear links to other policies in our school, to any policies concerned with the protection of all children in the school from various kinds of harm. These policies are listed below:

- Behaviour
- Health and safety
- Data protection (GDPR)

16. Policy review

The RHSE policy is reviewed every two years.