THE
ADEYFIELD ACADEMY

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Relationships, Sex and Health Education (including PSHCE) Policy

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Review Date: **October 2027**

Co-ordinator: **Miss I Walbank**

Signed by……..……. Dawn Mason (Headteacher)

Signed by…….…….. Leanne Stokoe (Chair of Governors)

1. Intentions and Aims

The Adeyfield Academy believes that Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) delivered through our PSHCE framework is an essential educational entitlement for all pupils and a fundamental pillar in preparing young people for adulthood.

The RSHE curriculum aims to equip pupils with the factual knowledge, critical thinking, and social skills required to make informed, safe, and ethical decisions regarding their physical health, mental wellbeing, personal safety, and relationships. The curriculum fosters self-efficacy, resilience, personal agency, and respect for rights and responsibilities under the law. It equips pupils with practical tools to identify harm, navigate risks, challenge prejudice, and access trusted support.

The RSHE curriculum focuses on fostering self-respect and healthy relationship norms; it does not promote or encourage sexual activity or early sexual experimentation.

The overarching aim of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum at The Adeyfield Academy is to provide an inclusive, age-appropriate, and carefully sequenced framework that empowers pupils with the knowledge, values, and personal agency needed to thrive in modern Britain.

Specifically, the RSHE curriculum aims to:

- Teach students how to keep themselves and others safe, physically and mentally healthy, and equipped to make informed choices both online and offline.
- Build self-worth, self-respect, confidence, and emotional literacy, empowering students to exercise personal agency, resist peer pressure, and navigate life transitions.
- Instil an understanding of legal rights and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 and applicable UK law, encouraging active citizenship, mutual respect, tolerance, and empathy across all protected characteristics.
- Equip students to recognise, prevent, and report all forms of child-on-child abuse including sexual harassment, public sexual harassment, online abuse, misogyny, misandry, stalking, and domestic abuse—creating a school culture where harmful behaviours are confidently challenged and reported.
- Establish a supportive classroom setting governed by clear ground rules, distancing techniques, and anonymous question boxes, enabling open discussion and factual exploration without judgment.
- Teach accurate anatomical, biological, and health vocabulary to give students a clear understanding of puberty, menstrual and gynaecological health, physical development, and personal hygiene.
- Ensure students know how and where to access confidential support, clear advice, and named signposting routes within the school (e.g., Designated Safeguarding Lead, Pastoral Tutors, Form Tutors) and through external agencies (e.g., NHS clinics, Childline, CEOP, local GP services).
- Address local and national public health priorities by providing medically accurate information on reducing unplanned teenage pregnancies, preventing STI transmission, understanding substance misuse risks, and navigating local healthcare services.
- Continuously adapt curriculum delivery in response to student voice, baseline assessment information, and local safeguarding trends.

2. Parent and Carer Partnership and Transparency

2.1 Strategic Commitment & Positioning

The Adeyfield Academy recognises that parents and carers are the primary educators of their children in learning about relationships, health, and personal development. The school's Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum is designed to complement, support, and build upon the guidance provided within the home. In accordance with Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance, this policy places parent partnership and transparency at the very centre of our delivery.

2.2 Embedding the DfE 7 Guiding Principles

To ensure high-quality, safe, and effective provision, The Adeyfield Academy embeds the DfE's seven guiding principles across all aspects of RSHE planning, delivery, and governance:

2.2.1 Engagement with Students:

Curriculum design, termly units, and topic adaptations are directly informed by structured pupil voice, baseline assessments, and feedback to ensure learning is age-appropriate, engaging, and relevant.

2.2.2 Engagement and Transparency with Parents:

The school maintains proactive communication regarding RSHE topics, ensuring parents have clear visibility of curriculum maps, lesson objectives, and teaching materials.

2.2.3 Positivity:

Teaching focuses on fostering self-worth, resilience, personal agency, and healthy relationship norms while strictly avoiding language that normalises harmful behaviour or stigmatises pupils.

2.2.4 Careful Sequencing:

Content is structured progressively in a spiral curriculum from Key Stage 3 through Key Stage 5, equipping pupils with knowledge and decision-making skills before they encounter relevant risks or life transitions.

2.2.5 Relevant and Responsive:

Topics are adapted dynamically to address local context, national trends, and internal safeguarding data, such as specific cohort challenges surrounding mental health, online harms, and child-on-child abuse.

2.2.6 Skilled Delivery of Participative Education:

RSHE is delivered by form tutors who have received training and quality-assured by external specialists who establish safe learning environments using ground rules, distancing techniques, and anonymous question boxes.

2.2.7 Whole-School Approach:

RSHE learning is reinforced across PSHCE, enhancement days, Science lessons, tutor time, year group assemblies, and our pastoral care, operating in complete alignment with our Safeguarding, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Equality, and Online Safety policies.

2.3 Parent Consultation & Review Timelines

We actively consult parents and carers whenever the RSHE policy is developed or substantially updated. Formal consultation windows take place annually prior to policy approval by the Governing Body. Parents are provided with structured feedback opportunities through online surveys, consultation meetings, and parent forums. If emerging local safeguarding trends require a minor adjustment or shift from the published curriculum map, parents will be notified in advance.

2.4 Access to Curriculum Resources & Parent Portal

The Adeyfield Academy ensures full transparency regarding all teaching resources used in RSHE lessons. Parents are invited to view representative samples of curriculum materials during annual consultation windows and may request to view any teaching material used across Key Stages 3 to 5.

The curriculum overview is accessible on our school website and lesson overviews as well lesson presentations are made accessible on request.

In line with statutory duties, we will not enter into contractual agreements with external providers that restrict the sharing of teaching materials with parents.

3. Parental Right to Request Withdrawal from Sex Education

3.1 Statutory

In accordance with Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance, parents and carers have a legal right to request that their child be withdrawn from school-defined Sex Education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. To ensure complete clarity for all stakeholders, there is no statutory right to withdraw students from:

- **Relationships Education:** Compulsory across all secondary key stages (covering healthy relationships, consent, online safety, respectful communication, and anti-bullying).
- **Health Education:** Compulsory across all secondary key stages (covering mental wellbeing, physical health, puberty, menstrual health, substance awareness, and navigating the healthcare system).
- **National Curriculum Science:** Compulsory statutory content delivered within the Science curriculum, including biological puberty, human reproductive anatomy, hormones, fertilisation, and human development.

3.2 School-Defined Sex Education

The right to request withdrawal applies solely and exclusively to non-Science, school-defined Sex Education modules. At the Adeyfield Academy this is strictly defined as explicit teaching regarding intimate sexual relationships, pleasure, delaying sexual activity, and personal values surrounding sex.

3.3 The Request & Decision-Making Process

Where a parent or carer wishes to request that their child be excused from school-defined sex education lessons, the following statutory process must be followed:

- **Written Request:** Parents/carers must submit a formal request in writing to the Deputy Headteacher outlining the specific content from which they wish their child to be excused.
- **Consultation Meeting:** Upon receiving a request, the Deputy Headteacher will arrange a meeting with the parents/carers. This discussion aims to clarify the exact nature, purpose, and age-appropriateness of the planned curriculum. As well as discuss the benefits of accessing sex education and highlight potential social, emotional, or practical impacts of withdrawal (including the likelihood that students may hear unverified or inaccurate information from peers). Finally, Record agreed actions and outcomes in writing.
- **Deputy Headteacher Decision:** The Deputy Headteacher will grant requests to withdraw a student from school-defined sex education except in exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances include cases where the Headteacher determines that withdrawal poses significant safeguarding risks or compromises the specific safety and welfare of a vulnerable student.
- **Provision of Purposeful Alternative Education:** If a student is withdrawn from school-defined sex education, the school maintains full responsibility for ensuring the student receives appropriate, purposeful, and supervised alternative education during the lesson period.

3.4 Statutory Pupil Opt-In Right ("Three Terms Before Turning 16")

In line with national legislation, a student has the statutory right to opt back into sex education three school terms before they turn 16 years old, regardless of prior parental withdrawal requests.

When a student exercises this statutory right:

- The school will automatically grant the pupil entry into planned sex education lessons and will ensure that any key foundational learning or resources missed during prior withdrawal are made fully accessible to the student.
- The school will inform the student's parents/carers of the pupil's decision to opt back in. However, any notification will be made with due regard for the best interests, emotional welfare, and safeguarding needs of the child, ensuring that exercising this right does not create a risk of harm or distress

4. Principle of Transparency

To ensure total clarity for parents, carers, staff, and governors, The Adeyfield Academy explicitly differentiates between mandatory statutory curriculum subjects (from which students cannot be withdrawn) and non-Science, school-defined Sex Education (from which parents may request withdrawal).

4.1 National Curriculum Science

Biological aspects of human growth, reproduction, and health are mandatory under the National Curriculum for Science. Parents do not have a right to withdraw their child from Science lessons. At Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, compulsory Science content includes:

- **Key Stage 3 (Year 8 Science)**: Human reproductive anatomy (structure and function of male and female reproductive systems), biological puberty, the biological menstrual cycle, fertilization, and the development of the human foetus.
- **Key Stage 4 (Year 11 Science)**: Hormonal control of the menstrual cycle, biological mechanisms of fertility and In-Vitro Fertilization (IVF) treatments, and the biological principles behind barrier and hormonal contraception.

4.2 Statutory Relationships & Health Education

Under DfE regulations, Relationships Education and Health Education are compulsory across all secondary key stages. Parents do not have a right to withdraw their son/daughter from these modules. These statutory modules cover:

- **Relationships Education:** Healthy and respectful friendships, romantic relationships, legal marriage and civil partnerships, understanding consent and boundaries, online safety, digital literacy, and the law regarding forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), domestic abuse, and sexual harassment.
- **Health Education:** Mental wellbeing, emotional regulation, physical fitness, healthy eating, substance awareness (alcohol, vaping, illegal drugs), basic first aid, puberty awareness, menstrual and gynaecological health (e.g., PCOS, PMS, menopause), and navigating the local healthcare system.

4.3 School-Defined Sex Education (Parental Right to Request Withdrawal Applies)

The Adeyfield Academy defines Sex Education as non-Science, standalone teaching within the PSHCE curriculum that explores intimate sexual relationships, pleasure, delaying sexual activity, and personal values surrounding sex.

The parental right to request withdrawal applies solely and exclusively to the following school-defined Sex Education lessons as highlighted in the lesson overview.

4.4 Signposting & Visual Transparency in Curriculum Maps

To make this separation completely transparent for parents during annual policy reviews and consultation, all PSHCE curriculum overviews will be published on the school website explicitly highlighting school-defined Sex Education units by color-colouring.

5. Curriculum Overview (Years 7 -13)

RSHE is delivered weekly across all year groups within PSHCE, complemented by Science, tutor time, assemblies, and personal development enhancement days.

- **Year 7**: Managing Change, Friends & Boundaries, Online Safety, Puberty & Dental Health, Tax & Money, Law & Crime.
- **Year 8**: Celebrating Differences, Public Space Safety, County Lines & Substance Misuse, RSHE & Contraception Intro, Mental Health, AI Literacy & Deepfakes.
- **Year 9**: Sex & Consent Law, Sexual Harassment & Stalking, Equality Act & Diversity, Substance Addictions, Contraception & STIs, Body Confidence & CPR, Conspiracies & Radicalisation.
- **Year 10**: British Values & Hate Crime, Mental Health & Knife Crime, Forced Marriage & Strangulation, Pleasure & Digital Consent, Sextortion & Incels, GP/Healthcare Navigation & Menstrual Health.
- **Year 11**: Adult Health & Organ Donation, Live Streaming & Vaping, Media Resilience & Abortion Ethics, Peer-on-Peer Abuse & Sexual Health, Misinformation & Cyber Flashing.
- **Year 12**: Career Planning & AI, Mental Wellbeing & Coercion, Pornography & Misogyny, Respectful Relationships & Power Dynamics, Personal Finance & Ethics.
- **Year 13**: Skills & Job Markets, Body Modification & Financial Control, Routes to Parenthood & Fertility, Driver Safety & Vape Spiking, Human Rights & Social Justice.

Teachers establish safe classrooms and clear ground rules at the beginning of every RSHE unit. Distancing techniques (e.g., case studies, role-play scenarios, fictitious characters) and anonymous question boxes are utilised to enable pupils to explore sensitive topics safely without personal exposure.

6. Equality, Inclusion and Diversity

6.1 Equality Act 2010 Compliance

The Adeyfield Academy ensures that RSHE provision is fully inclusive and accessible to all pupils, strictly complying with the Equality Act 2010. All protected characteristics; age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage/civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, race, religion/belief, sex, and sexual orientation are represented respectfully across the planned curriculum.

6.2 LGBT+ Content & Gender Identity Neutrality

LGBT+ content is integrated smoothly across Key Stages 3 to 5 rather than delivered as an isolated standalone unit. Students learn about diverse family structures, healthy same-sex relationships, and anti-LGBT+ bullying.

In accordance with September 2026 DfE statutory guidance regarding gender identity, teaching focuses factually on the law and biological sex. The school maintains strict neutrality, teaching the legal protections under the Equality Act 2010 without teaching gender identity as an uncontested factual concept.

6.3 Adaptation for Pupils with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

RSHE learning is tailored to ensure full accessibility for students with SEND through Individual support profiles , EHCPs, differentiated learning materials, visual aids, and personalised pastoral support through our inclusion space, Thrive.

7. External Providers and Visitor Quality Assurance

While external specialists (e.g., Breck Foundation, Paul Hannaford, Bold Voices, Show Racism the Red Card) enhance curriculum delivery, The Adeyfield Academy retains overall legal and pedagogical responsibility. All external visitors undergo rigorous quality assurance.

A member of staff from the Adeyfield Academy will remain present in the classroom throughout all external sessions, ensuring active supervision and immediate handling of any safeguarding disclosures.All presentation slides, workshops, and handouts must be submitted for approval by the PSHCE Lead at least two weeks prior to delivery. Visitors are pre-briefed on school safeguarding procedures, disclosures protocols, KCSIE 2025 compliance, and class cohort vulnerabilities.

8. Staff Training

8.1 Confidentiality & Safeguarding Disclosures

Students are informed that staff cannot promise complete confidentiality if a disclosure indicates a child is at risk of harm. Any disclosure of a safeguarding nature will immediately be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in accordance with the Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE 2025.

8.2 Staff Training

The Deputy Headteacher coordinates ongoing training for all staff delivering RSHE. Training covers sensitive topic facilitation, handling difficult questions, updated statutory themes and handling disclosures. Staff training is delivered through twilight sessions, spotlight briefings and staff inset. It is further enhanced through walk and talk lesson plans shared with staff on sensitive topics and best practice shared in the weekly staff bulletin.

9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Governance

9.1 Classroom Assessment & Monitoring

RSHE delivery and pupil progress are monitored through dedicated student PSHCE exercise books, baseline and end-of-unit assessments, learning walks, student voice surveys and student voice focus groups.

9.2 Governing Body Oversight

In accordance with Paragraph 38 of DfE Statutory Guidance, the Governing Body ensures that:

- All students make good progress toward expected RSHE learning outcomes.
- The subjects are well led, effectively managed, and carefully planned.
- Provision is subject to regular self-evaluation and accessible to pupils with SEND.
- Clear information is provided to parents regarding curriculum content and withdrawal rights.
- The curriculum is fully resourced, staffed, and timetabled to fulfil legal obligations.

10. Cross-Referenced School Policies

This RSHE Policy operates in complete alignment with the following Adeyfield Academy policies:

- Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy (KCSIE 2025)
- Equalities & Diversity Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy & Behaviour Policy
- Online Safety & Digital Media Policy
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Policy

Appendix 1

PSHCE Year Overview 2026-2027