



Mary Hare Policy: SCH005 – Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy (RSHE) Policy

Policy Owner: PSHEE Coordinators

Date Approved: Summer 2026

Approved by: ERP Committee

Next review date: Summer 2028



Securing the future of deaf children and young people

Registered charity 1048386

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Introduction

1. This policy covers the approach adopted by Mary Hare (MH) in relation to the teaching of Relationships Education (RE) in the primary school (MHP) and of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in the secondary school (MHS) as set out in the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education in June 2025.
2. This statutory guidance states that RE is compulsory in all primary schools in England, RSHE is compulsory in all secondary schools. MHS and MHP have started teaching the new guidance from September 2026.
3. From September 2026, the MHS and MHP will deliver Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education in accordance with the updated statutory guidance for Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) issued by the Department for Education. In line with this guidance, the curriculum has been systematically reviewed and revised to ensure full compliance with statutory requirements and alignment with safeguarding priorities. The programme reflects an enhanced focus on online safety, including emerging risks associated with digital technologies, as well as a strengthened emphasis on respectful relationships, the identification and prevention of harmful behaviours (including misogyny and coercion), and the promotion of pupil wellbeing and resilience. The curriculum is coherently sequenced, age-appropriate, and inclusive, enabling pupils to build knowledge and skills progressively over time. Implementation is supported through staff training, regular review, and quality assurance processes to ensure consistency and impact. The school monitors provision to ensure that all pupils are effectively prepared for life in modern Britain and are able to stay safe, healthy, and respectful in their relationships.
4. This policy has been written based on the current framework provided by the PSHE Association, which MH is a member of. This policy is available to parents/carers and other interested parties either as a written document or on the school website.

Rationale

5. At MH we believe that RE/RSHE is important for our pupils as we recognise that the children and young people in our care need to know how to stay safe and healthy as they progress through their lives; they also need to be able to manage the demands of their personal, social and academic lives successfully in order to achieve positive outcomes. This takes added significance at MH as we provide 24-hour care for our boarding pupils, who make up the vast majority of the school's population, during term-time.
6. In addition, children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) are recognised as one of the groups particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and so it is appropriate and relevant that this is given prominence within the wider curriculum.
7. The nature of boarding away from home means that the majority of our parents are distanced, to varying degrees, from the learning processes that their children go through. Nevertheless, MH seeks to complement the role of parents/carers as prime educators by providing sound and current teaching on RE/RSHE. It is, therefore, necessary to develop the partnership between home and school so that all interested parties are clear about what is being taught in RE/RSHE and the reasoning behind this.
8. RE/RSHE is delivered in an inclusive and non-judgemental manner that reflects current attitudes in society and which promotes respect for diversity. This includes challenging discriminatory views that are not considered to meet this inclusive approach.

9. The intended outcomes of our RE/RSHE programme are that pupils will:
- Know and understand how to keep themselves safe and healthy, both physically and mentally;
 - Understand they have a right to be listened to and respected, and to decide what happens to them;
 - Understand they have a responsibility to follow laws and reasonable rules for the sake of themselves and those around them;
 - Develop the skills to play an active role in looking after themselves and to contribute to their community;
 - Develop the attributes necessary to take their place as independent and informed citizens and to overcome difficulties they may face.

Delivery

10. RE and RSE are seen as integral to the wider teaching of Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education (PSHEE) which has formed a formal part of the school curriculum at MH. Thus, RE/RSE will continue to be delivered within the time allocated to PSHEE.
11. At MHP, the RE programme will be led by the teacher with the responsibility for PSHE and taught by the class teacher, who are Teachers of the Deaf. Relationships Education is taught weekly for the duration of the summer term.
12. At MHS, the RSHE programme will be led by the PSHEE Leads with responsibility for PSHEE throughout the school. The PSHEE programme will be taught by teachers interested in teaching PSHEE as part of their timetable allocation. At present, PSHEE is taught in timetabled lessons across Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 5, and within Religious Studies (as part of a carousel) at Key Stage 4. The subject will be monitored and evaluated by student's surveys and self-checking tracking documents included in the student's books. These are evaluated by staff.
13. If a teacher is asked questions about topics in Sex Education that the school does not cover or that relates to Sex Education from which the child has been withdrawn, they will handle this sensitively based on the needs of the child.
14. Teachers with responsibility for PSHEE will prepare and review the programme of study; an outline of this programme is available on request. Parents and carers will be able to view curriculum maps on the MH website.
15. Teachers with responsibility for PSHEE will work with a designated member of the governing body to ensure that the policy and programme of study are fit for purpose and enable MH to provide a relevant and up-to-date education in RE/RSHE. This working partnership will also be important in fostering links between school and parents/carers to ensure that the latter are informed and able to contribute to the ongoing development of the course.

Parental Right of Withdrawal

16. Aspects of physical development, including sexual development and reproduction, are covered as part of the National Curriculum (NC) in science. As this is statutory, there is no parental right of withdrawal from these lessons. This means that parents/carers of pupils at MHP have no right of withdrawal from RE for their children. However, the right of withdrawal still applies for any sex education in addition to that covered as part of NC Science, and parents will be informed accordingly. Any request for withdrawal will be automatically granted by the Headteacher.

17. At MHS, parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Such a request will initially be directed to the Headteacher who will then have the opportunity to engage in discussion with parents/carers before a decision is taken. This right of withdrawal applies up to and until 3 terms before the child's 16th birthday, at which point the child is deemed capable of deciding whether or not to attend the sex education lessons.
18. There is a difference between Relationships Education and Sex Education. Relationships Education does not involve explaining the details of different forms of sexual activity but can cover sensitive topics such as sexual violence in order to keep children safe.
19. In the case that a child is withdrawn from any lessons, the school has a responsibility to continue to provide appropriate and purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Curriculum Design and Practice

20. At MHP the curriculum design comes under the framework of changing and growing from the PSHE Association for pupils with SEND.
21. Our RE/RSHE programmes will be taught through a range of teaching methods and interactive activities which will allow pupils the opportunity to develop and clarify their understanding of relevant topics. Resources will be selected on the basis of their relevance and appropriateness and will take into account the level of maturity of the students and their support for the school's values. We have developed a shared resource of adapted and devised materials that have been found to work well with our students. We are also aware of the increased risk deaf young people and adults are for mental ill health so are following the National Deaf Children Society's Healthy Minds programme in the Year 8 curriculum.
22. Pupils will be encouraged to reflect on their own learning and progress in different topics and will be encouraged to complete evaluative tasks that will enable teachers to have an indication of the learning that has taken place. Pupils will also be asked for feedback on the effectiveness of the course and if there are any improvements that can be made.
23. Given the nature of the topics covered as part of RE/RSHE, teachers will work to cultivate a safe learning environment that will enable sensitive topics to be discussed and encourage pupils to contribute actively to their learning, when they feel able, without fearing any untoward reactions from others; one way of ensuring this is to agree 'ground rules' for the lessons. Similarly, teachers will use distancing techniques, such as the use of case studies and scenarios, to avoid discussions becoming personal.
24. Where potentially sensitive or controversial issues arise, teachers will be encouraged to seek further advice if needed from colleagues, including ELSAs, or the PSHE Association (or other reputable organisations) before responding to pupils.
25. Teachers are aware that effective RE/RSHE can lead to disclosure of a child protection issue – in this case the teacher will follow the school's safeguarding procedure and consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or a Deputy DSL, if necessary).
26. Learning in RE/RSHE is enhanced by having external agencies and visitors invited into school to contribute to certain topics. The teacher organising these sessions will need to ensure that any content and approaches used are appropriate to the pupils being taught, and that the visitors are aware of the school's safeguarding policy. An example being the NSPCC Speak Out Stay Safe programme and SignHealth delivering the Healthy Relationships Programme to Year 9s. The teacher(s) organising these

sessions will need to ensure that any content and approaches used are appropriate to the age and level of maturity of the pupils being taught, and that the visitors are aware of the school's safeguarding policy.

27. Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss concerns relating to RE/RSHE with class teachers or the lead PSHEE teacher. This can be done via communication channels such as telephone or email, or parents/carers may wish to make an appointment with a teacher during the Parental Consultation Days which take place during the year.
28. Should there be a perceived need to make major changes to the delivery of RE/RSHE, the designated governor and parents/carers will be informed and given an opportunity to air their views on any proposed changes.

Other Linked Policy

29. PSHEE Policy – SCH004

Policy Version Detail

Reviewed Date:	Version:	Details of change:
Spring 2024	0.1	Review and update
Spring 2026	0.2	Review and update