Phoenix Arch School

Kind, Curious, Creative and Collaborative

PSHE and RSHE Policy

2026–27

School	Phoenix Arch School
Policy owner	Headteacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
DSL	Falu Mehta
Deputy DSLs	Lennie Sarkis and Luana Oancea
PSHE Lead	Luana Oancea
Approval	Governing Body – September 2026
Review date	September 2027, or sooner if statutory guidance changes

11 Statement of intent

At Phoenix Arch, we want every pupil to belong, build trusting relationships and have a reliable way to express what they want, need and feel. Our PSHE curriculum helps autistic pupils aged 4 to 11 practise these skills in everyday school life, build independence and learn how to stay safe as they grow. We work with families and the school nurse so pupils can use what they learn across settings.

- **Kind.** Pupils learn to care for themselves and others, respect different families and recognise what makes a friendship safe and supportive.
- **Curious.** Pupils are encouraged to ask questions about feelings, bodies and relationships, using the communication that works for them.
- **Creative.** Pupils use stories, role-play, visuals and practical routines to explore choices and rehearse ways to express a boundary or seek help.
- **Collaborative.** Pupils practise sharing, listening and solving problems together. Class teams work with families and specialists to reinforce learning.

Relationships Education and RSE aims

Relationships Education (RE) and Health Education are statutory at primary level and form part of our PSHE curriculum. Phoenix Arch also teaches relevant content through the National Curriculum for Science. The school does not currently teach additional, non-statutory sex education.

Our primary relationships and health curriculum lays the foundations for later Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We help pupils build respectful relationships, understand privacy, consent and personal boundaries, and recognise unsafe behaviour in person and online. Pupils learn accurate words for body parts, prepare for physical and emotional changes, make informed choices and practise seeking help from trusted adults. We promote equality and teach respect for different identities, backgrounds and family structures.

This policy has regard to the Department for Education’s July 2025 statutory RSHE guidance, effective from 1 September 2026, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (KCSIE).

2 Curriculum and what pupils learn

In EYFS, Personal, Social and Emotional Development focuses on self-help and growing independence in everyday routines. In Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils learn to share and take turns, recognise their own strengths and preferences, understand what they have in common with others, care for living things and make personal choices.

Wider PSHE curriculum

- **Identity and belonging.** Strengths, interests, aspirations, understanding autism where appropriate, respecting difference and taking part in school and community life.
- **Families and relationships.** Different families, caring friendships, respectful behaviour, sharing, resolving conflict and recognising bullying and discrimination.
- **Personal and online safety.** Privacy, personal space, permission and boundaries, saying or communicating “no”, trusted adults, unsafe situations, online risks and asking for help.
- **Emotional wellbeing.** Recognising feelings, co-regulation, coping with change, building confidence and knowing when and how to seek support.
- **Physical health and self-care.** Food, movement, sleep, oral health, hygiene, basic first aid, medicines and age-appropriate learning about tobacco, alcohol and drugs.
- **Growing and changing.** Body changes, puberty, menstruation, emotional changes, personal care and preparation for secondary school.
- **Living in the wider world.** Making choices, using money, caring for living things and contributing to the community.

Focused teaching in Years 5 and 6

Dedicated sessions build on earlier learning. Staff adapt the pace, language and methods to pupils’ communication and developmental needs.

- **Growing and changing.** Puberty, menstruation, emotional changes and ways to manage feelings.
- **Privacy, boundaries and safety.** Knowing which places and activities are private or public, respecting personal space, communicating “no” or “stop”, and knowing how to respond safely to unfamiliar people and seek help.
- **Personal care and transition.** Building personal hygiene routines and preparing for the people, routines and changes pupils may encounter at secondary school.

3 How we teach

Teachers plan across Orchard, Hedgerows and Woodlands. Orchard follows the National Curriculum where applicable. Hedgerows adapts the curriculum, and Woodlands uses the Engagement Model where appropriate. Teachers plan from each pupil’s starting points, communication profile and EHCP outcomes. In line with the SEND Policy, teams use therapy advice and agreed reasonable adjustments to remove barriers. They review small-step progress with families on Target Setting Days and through EHCP reviews.

We teach through regularly timetabled, evidence-informed lessons, classroom routines, assemblies and real-life practice. Pupils can use speech, Makaton, symbols, objects of reference or AAC, including Proloquo where used. Staff use clear anatomical vocabulary, visuals, modelling, social stories and repetition. Pupils can ask questions privately or through a trusted adult. Staff use observation, pupil voice and evidence of skills in everyday contexts to assess progress.

Teaching reflects diverse families, cultures, faiths, disabilities and identities. Staff challenge stereotypes, prejudice and bullying. Pupils have accessible ways to express their views, communicate discomfort and ask for help. In line with the Behaviour and Regulation Policy, staff model calm, respectful language, notice early signs of distress, reduce demands and offer familiar co-regulation support. Zones of Regulation, ELSA and Thrive-informed support reinforce teaching where appropriate.

The PSHE lead sequences the primary statutory content across the year. Class teams tell families which topics will be taught and when. Sensitive topics are introduced in an age- and developmentally appropriate way before pupils are likely to encounter the changes or risks covered.

4 Puberty and working with families

The Brent school nurse delivers a puberty workshop for parents and carers and puberty lessons for pupils. The nurse and class teams plan the lessons together so that materials, language and activities are accessible. Lessons cover physical and emotional changes, menstruation, hygiene and ways to ask for help. School staff remain responsible for the curriculum and safeguarding during visiting sessions.

We tell families in advance what the puberty lessons will cover, when they will take place and how to view materials or raise questions. Phoenix Arch also runs the Cygnet Plus programme for parents and carers, providing a space to explore autistic children's needs and share practical ways to support them at home.

We actively consult parents and carers when developing and reviewing this policy and seek pupils' views in accessible ways. We publish the approved policy on the school website and provide a free copy on request. We show families a representative sample of resources. Parents and carers can ask the class teacher or PSHE lead to view all RSHE teaching materials, including resources used by visiting professionals.

Teachers respond calmly to questions outside the planned primary curriculum. They use factual, age-appropriate language, offer a private follow-up with a trusted adult where helpful and follow safeguarding procedures if a question raises a concern. Where appropriate, they help the pupil discuss the question with their family.

5 Right to withdraw

The right to withdraw applies to any additional primary sex education. It does not apply to Relationships Education, Health Education (including puberty and menstruation), or statutory Science. If the school introduces additional sex education, it will consult families and explain the content in advance. Parents can request withdrawal from that content through the Headteacher. The school will grant the request, keep a record and provide purposeful alternative education.

6 Safeguarding and confidentiality

Staff set clear ground rules and avoid asking pupils to share personal experiences in front of others. Staff explain in accessible language that they may need to share a concern to keep someone safe. If a pupil makes a disclosure, staff listen, record the concern on CPOMS and report it immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or a deputy, following the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Preventative education under KCSIE is part of our whole-school safeguarding approach. Pupils learn to recognise unsafe touch, pressure or secrecy, respect boundaries, identify trusted adults and report concerns. Staff challenge sexism, racism, misogyny, homophobia, biphobia and other prejudice. Respond to sexual harassment, sexual violence and other child-on-child abuse under the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Take account of communication barriers so pupils can report in a way that works for them.

7 E-safety in PSHE

In line with the E-Safety Policy, pupils revisit online safety through lessons and assemblies at the start of each half term. Staff teach privacy, respectful online behaviour, safe contact and how to get help, using visuals, modelling and AAC. Pupils use approved devices with supervision and LGfL filtering and monitoring. Agreed communication and assistive technology remain available.

Families are offered workshops on online safety, recreational screen time and reporting concerns. Staff tell the DSL or a deputy about online safeguarding concerns and record them on CPOMS in line with the E-Safety Policy.

8 Roles and responsibilities

- **Governing Body.** Approve the policy and oversee provision, inclusion and review.
- **Headteacher.** Ensure statutory duties are met, staff are supported and families are consulted.
- **PSHE lead and SENCO.** Plan progression, support staff with accessible materials, and review how teaching meets pupils' communication needs and EHCP outcomes.
- **Class teams.** Teach and reinforce agreed content, assess progress and communicate with families.
- **School nurse.** Plan and deliver the parent puberty workshop and pupil lessons with school staff.

9 Monitoring and review

The PSHE lead and senior leaders review planning, pupil work and observations each term. They consider what pupils can communicate or do more independently and where they need further teaching. Pupil and family feedback, including feedback from workshops, informs the annual policy review and governors' oversight.

Related school policies and guidance

Safeguarding and Child Protection, Behaviour and Regulation, SEND, Equality, E-Safety, Anti-Bullying and the Science curriculum.

DfE statutory RSHE guidance (July 2025, effective 1 September 2026)

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026