



## Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd

### Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy (RSHE)

*Rooted in nature, guided by connection*

#### 1. Our Vision

At Little Acorns Forest Schools Ltd, we believe that learning about relationships, health, wellbeing, and self-awareness is best done **through meaningful experiences in nature**. Our RSHE and Health Education provision is guided by the values of Forest School: curiosity, connection, respect, and resilience. We aim to nurture confident, healthy, and emotionally intelligent individuals through **child-led, outdoor learning** that supports their personal development in a holistic way.

#### 2. Aims of this Policy

This policy outlines how we deliver Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) and Health Education in a way that:

- Aligns with UK statutory guidance
- Reflects the unique ethos and practices of Forest School
- Promotes emotional, social, physical and mental wellbeing through **nature-connected** learning
- Builds respectful, kind relationships — with others, themselves, and the natural world
- Helps children and young people to navigate the world safely and confidently

#### 3. Statutory Framework

Our approach complies with:

- **DfE Statutory Guidance (2019)**: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education
- **The Education Act 1996 & Learning and Skills Act 2000**
- **The Equality Act 2010**
- **DfE Revised RSHE Guidance** (effective from Sept 2026)
- **Forest School principles** developed by the Forest School Association

#### 4. Our Forest School Ethos and Approach to RSHE

Our Forest School approach is:

- **Child-centred and play-based**: We follow learners' interests and create safe opportunities for natural discussions about relationships, feelings, changes, and health
- **Experiential and holistic**: Children learn through hands-on experiences — risk-taking, reflection, team-building, and connection with the outdoors
- **Rooted in emotional safety**: We prioritise trust, emotional literacy, and consent in all interactions

- **Seasonal and sensory:** Nature supports discussions about change, growth, life cycles, boundaries, and care — key RSHE themes
- **Inclusive and respectful:** All learners are valued and included, regardless of background, ability, identity or experience

## 5. What We Teach

### Relationships Education (All Learners)

- **Caring friendships:** Building trust and understanding through shared outdoor play
- **Respectful relationships:** Learning about boundaries, empathy and kindness through cooperative activities
- **Families and people who care for us:** Recognising that families come in many forms
- **Being safe:** Understanding consent, appropriate touch, risk and safety in both nature and social relationships
- **Online safety:** Age-appropriate discussions about digital interactions and boundaries

### Health Education

- **Mental wellbeing:** Supporting emotional literacy, self-regulation, mindfulness and resilience through nature connection and reflection
- **Physical health:** Movement, nutrition, rest, and hygiene integrated into practical outdoor learning
- **Growing and changing:** Using natural cycles and seasonal changes to understand puberty, body awareness, and transitions
- **First aid:** Age-appropriate, practical knowledge about responding to minor injuries in the field
- **Drugs, alcohol and tobacco (older learners):** Awareness of risks and informed choices through age-sensitive discussions

### Sex Education (where applicable)

- While not statutory in primary settings, we may offer age-appropriate **Sex Education** to prepare children for adolescence. This includes:
  - Understanding reproduction (linked to science)
  - Respect for self and others
  - Consent and privacy
  - Safe and trusted adults to talk to

Parents/carers will be informed and consulted if this is included.

## 6. How We Teach

- **Integrated into Forest School sessions:** RSHE themes emerge naturally through group dynamics, conflict resolution, risk assessment, and reflection
- **Storytelling and nature metaphors:** Life cycles, growth, interdependence, change — all illustrated in the natural world

- **Circle time and reflection:** Safe spaces for children to explore feelings, identity and experiences
- **Child-led inquiry:** Staff respond to learners' questions in age-appropriate, honest, and inclusive ways
- **Gentle, ongoing conversations:** Rather than 'lessons', we see RSHE as a continuous process rooted in trust and experience

## 7. Inclusion and Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring RSHE is inclusive and accessible to all. We:

- Use inclusive language and representations in stories and discussions
- Ensure activities and communication are adapted for children with SEND
- Respect and reflect the diverse cultures, identities and beliefs of our learners and families
- Support children who may have experienced trauma, additional needs, or family disruption, with sensitivity

## 8. Role of Families

We recognise **parents and carers are a child's first educators**, and we aim to work in partnership with them. We:

- Inform families about what is being covered and when
- Offer opportunities for parents to discuss the curriculum and share views
- Respect the right of parents to withdraw their child from *non-statutory* sex education elements (not from Relationships or Health Education)

## 9. Safeguarding and Sensitive Topics

- All RSHE delivery is underpinned by our **safeguarding policy**
- Staff are trained to handle sensitive topics and disclosures with care
- We provide clear boundaries around confidentiality — children are encouraged to talk, but staff may have a duty to share concerns
- We ensure children know they can always speak to a trusted adult if they are worried or unsure

## 10. Monitoring and Review

We monitor the impact and quality of RSHE through:

- Observing how learners interact, reflect, and respond
- Gathering feedback from learners and families
- Reviewing and adapting content to suit the group's stage and needs
- Ensuring staff are supported and confident in delivering sensitive content

This policy will be reviewed **every year**, or in response to new statutory guidance or local needs.

## 11. Staff Training and Support

Staff and volunteers receive regular training and reflective supervision to ensure they:

- Are confident and comfortable delivering RSHE themes
- Know how to manage questions and disclosures appropriately
- Understand the legal and ethical framework of RSHE
- Model respectful, inclusive relationships in their interactions with learners

## 12. Final Note

At our Forest School, RSHE is not a subject — it is part of how we live, learn and grow together in nature. We believe children learn best when they feel **safe, seen, and supported**, and when they are given space to explore what it means to be a kind, healthy, and whole human being.

**Date of Policy:** August 2025

**Review Due:** January 2027

**Approved by:** Kate Morison (Forest School Lead)