

# Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Date reviewed: September 2025

Date of next review: September 2026



Rastrick  
High School



Polaris  
Multi-Academy Trust

## **What is relationships and sex education (RSE)?**

RSE is the starting point to lifelong learning about physical, social, moral, cultural, ethical, emotional, and sexual 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. RSE hopes to provide accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It will also give pupils essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe in the modern world, both on and offline.

## **Principles and Values**

Rastrick High School believes that RSE should:

- *Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.*
- *Be an entitlement for all young people.*
- *Encourage every pupil to contribute to their collective community.*
- *Support each individual as they grow and learn.*
- *Support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness.*
- *Encourage pupils and teachers to share and respect each other's views and promote the values of love, respect and care for each other.*
- *Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.*
- *Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up and seek to work with them to improve the curriculum.*
- *Recognise that the wider community has much to offer.*

## **Purpose**

High-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of Relationships and Sex can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. Our Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy is designed with the following purposes:

- *To inform pupils about different types of relationships, including friendships, family relationships and intimate relationships.*
- *To understand how to build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for others, commitment, tolerance, boundaries and consent; how to manage conflict and how to recognise unhealthy relationships.*
- *To ensure pupils know how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health.*
- *To promote healthy relationships and safety online.*
- *To teach factual knowledge around sex, sexual health and sexuality within the context of relationships; to help pupils acquire the skills and understanding to make considered decisions about safe and lawful sexual behaviour and personal safety, now and in the future.*
- *To help pupils acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary.*

## **Main elements of RSE**

**Attitudes and values.** Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations. Learning the value of family life, marriage and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children. Learning the value of respect, love and care. Exploring, considering and understanding of moral dilemmas. Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.

**Personal and social skills.** Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively. Developing self-respect and empathy for others. Learning to make choices based on an understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice. Developing an appreciation of choices made. Managing conflict. Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation, abuse and sexual pressure.

**Knowledge and understanding.** Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages. Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships. Learning about contraception, STIs and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services. Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, the benefits to be gained from such delay and choices in pregnancy. Learning about the law and how it protects individuals from a range of harms, including online.

RSE will be age-appropriate, building knowledge and life skills over time in a way that prepares pupils for issues they will soon face. It is an integral part of our whole school PSHE education provision which in addition to the RSE elements, also includes internet safety and harm, media, being safe, mental wellbeing, physical health and fitness, healthy eating, drugs, alcohol and tobacco, health and prevention, basic first aid.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Some RSE is taught through the PSHE programme during form time and some through science and other curriculum areas. Form tutors are best placed to deliver RSE as they know pupils well and see pupils every day so can support pupils effectively. However, all teachers play an important pastoral role by offering support to pupils. (Any teacher can be approached by a pupil who experiences a difficulty regarding sex or relationships issues).

The senior leadership team (SLT) will endeavour to support the provision and development of RSE in line with this policy by providing leadership, training and appropriate resourcing.

**The Director of Personal Development** will maintain an overview of RSE provision and have overall responsibility for its development. This will include keeping up to date with developments and good practice, developing provision to meet pupil's needs, providing support and resources for staff, arranging staff training, liaison with outside agencies, monitoring and evaluation.

### **RSE is delivered by Form Tutors**

Support staff may be involved in a supportive role in some RSE lessons and also play an important, informal pastoral support role with pupils. They will have access to information about the RSE programme and will be supported in their pastoral role.

School Governors have responsibilities for school policies. They will be consulted about the RSE provision and policy and have regular reports at Governors' meetings.

### **Meeting the needs of all learners**

Our RSE programme is inclusive of all our learners. Young people may have varying needs regarding RSE depending on their circumstances and background. The school strongly believes that all pupils should have access to RSE that is relevant to their needs. In line with the Equalities Act, we are mindful of sexuality/sexual orientation, Gender identity, ethnicity, gender special educational needs and disability. We are also mindful that 'family' is a broad concept and includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of them.

When planning teaching for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities, high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised is the starting point to ensure accessibility of this subject area. We consider the preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

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 are taken into consideration when designing sessions.

### **Delivery of RSE**

The main RSE programme will be planned and delivered through Form Time. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through Science lessons, other aspects of RSE arise in tutor time and cross-curricular links exist within a number of subject areas including Religious Education, Biology and English.

Our RSE programme is mainly based on the PHSE Association resources, with appropriate supplementary material used to complement it when appropriate.

### **Pupils receive 1 lesson per week of PSHE/RSE**

Our RSE programme will be taught through a range of teaching methods and interactive activities, including the use of case studies, research, role play, quizzes and video, small group discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers. RSE takes place within mixed sex classes or single gender groups as deemed appropriate and relevant. Should a designated RSE teacher be absent, it would not be undertaken by a short-term supply teacher. Pupils should be secure in their knowledge and understanding of the topics taught and retention of knowledge is given priority. Formative assessment will be a key element of all RSE lessons/provision to check pupils understanding.

The curriculum overview below is a summary of our PSHE curriculum.

	<b>Autumn 1</b> Health & wellbeing	<b>Autumn 2</b> Living in the wider world	<b>Spring 1</b> Relationships	<b>Spring 2</b> Health & wellbeing	<b>Summer 1</b> Relationships	<b>Summer 2</b> Living in the wider world
<b>Year 7</b>	<b>Personal Wellbeing</b> Transition to secondary school and personal safety in and outside school, including first aid	<b>Developing skills and aspirations</b> Careers, teamwork and enterprise skills, and raising aspirations	<b>Diversity</b> Diversity, prejudice, and bullying	<b>Emotional Wellbeing</b> Healthy routines, influences on health, puberty, unwanted contact, and FGM	<b>Healthy Relationships</b> Self-worth, romance and friendships (including online) and relationship boundaries	<b>Financial decision making</b> Saving, borrowing, budgeting and making financial choices
<b>Year 8</b>	<b>Personal Wellbeing</b> Alcohol and drug misuse and pressures relating to drug use	<b>Community and careers</b> Equality of opportunity in careers and life choices, and different types and patterns of work	<b>Diversity</b> Discrimination in all its forms, including: racism, religious discrimination, disability, discrimination, sexism, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia	<b>Emotional wellbeing</b> Mental health and emotional wellbeing, including body image and coping strategies	<b>Healthy Relationships</b> Gender identity, sexual orientation, consent, sexting, and an introduction to contraception	<b>Digital literacy</b> Online safety, digital literacy, media reliability, and gambling hooks
<b>Year 9</b>	<b>Personal Wellbeing</b> Healthy and unhealthy friendships, assertiveness, substance misuse, and gang exploitation	<b>Setting goals</b> Learning strengths, career options and goal setting as part of the GCSE options process	<b>Diversity</b> Families and parenting, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and relationship changes	<b>Emotional wellbeing</b> Diet, exercise, lifestyle balance and healthy choices, and first aid	<b>Healthy Relationships</b> Relationships and sex education including consent, pregnancy and contraception, the risks of STIs, and attitudes to pornography	<b>Employability skills</b> Employability and online presence
<b>Year 10</b>	<b>Personal Wellbeing</b> Mental health and ill health, stigma, safeguarding health, including during periods of transition or change	<b>Financial decision making</b> The impact of financial decisions, debt, gambling and the impact of advertising on financial choices	<b>Diversity</b> Radicalisation and extremism, communities, belonging and challenging extremism	<b>Emotional wellbeing</b> The influence and impact of drugs, gangs, role models and the media	<b>Healthy relationships</b> Relationships and sex expectations, myths, pleasure and challenges, including the impact of media and pornography	<b>Work experience</b> Preparation for and evaluation of work experience and readiness for work
<b>Year 11</b>	<b>Next steps</b> Application processes, and skills for further education, employment and career progression	<b>Personal Wellbeing</b> Self-efficacy, stress management, and future opportunities	<b>Diversity</b> Communication within different relationships, personal values, assertive communication (including in relation to contraception and sexual health), relationship challenges and abuse	<b>Emotional wellbeing</b> Responsible health choices, and safety in independent contexts	<b>Healthy Relationships</b> Different families and parental responsibilities, pregnancy, marriage and forced marriage and changing relationships	

## **Safe and Effective Practice**

We will ensure a safe learning environment. Ground rules have been agreed to provide a common values framework within which to teach:

- Pupils will be prepared, so that they will know how to minimise any embarrassment they feel.
- No one (teacher or pupil) should be expected to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.

Distancing techniques such as stories, scenarios, clips from TV programmes or case studies can provide fictional characters and storylines that stimulate discussion whilst 'de-personalising' discussions. This will enable pupils to engage more objectively with the lesson content. The following or similar questions can be used to support distanced discussion:

What is happening to them? Why might this be happening? How are they feeling? What are they thinking? What do other people think of them? Who could help them? What would you tell them to do if they asked for help? What could you say or do to persuade them to act differently?

Sometimes an individual pupil will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered and can be addressed later. Rastrick High School believes that individual teachers must use their skill and discretion in these situations and if necessary, seek the advice of another member of staff about how to answer a question. Staff receive regular training on how to handle difficult conversations through our CPD programme. Where necessary, pupils can be referred to appropriate agencies (i.e. Pupil Support Services, School Nurse, external Counsellor).

Pupils will be given the opportunity to raise questions by having an anonymous question box available before, during and after all RSE lessons. Pupils are also made aware of how to access confidential information and support after the lesson, should they need it.

RSE involves consideration of sensitive issues about which different people may hold strong and varying views. The school's approach to RSE will be balanced and take account of, and be sensitive to, different viewpoints but will not be based on personal bias.

## **Safeguarding**

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. If a pupil discloses something of a personal nature, teachers will consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and in his/her absence one of the Assistant DSLs and log their concern on CPOMS (our safeguarding management information system). A decision will be made about whether parents/carers need to be informed and the pupil will be kept informed about how the disclosure is treated and who will have access to the information.

Staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff will make this clear to pupils. All external visitors are selected carefully in line with our values framework and school ethos and are required to follow the Academy's safeguarding procedures from the point of arrival. Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to meet with the Director of Personal Development before delivering any sessions to discuss content and make-up of the groups. Teachers will

always be present during visitors' sessions.

### **The Right to Withdraw**

Department for Education statutory guidance states that from September 2020, all secondary schools must deliver Relationships and Sex Education. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the Sex Education aspect of the curriculum, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum for Science, specifically "the teaching of biological aspects of human growth and reproduction". There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, as set out by legislation. Parents/carers are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Head of School, or a designated Senior Leader, who will invite parents/carers in for a discussion with a member of staff before granting such requests. Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss their decisions at the earliest opportunity. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record.

The Head of School will discuss the request with the parent/carer and take appropriate action. If a pupil is excused from sex education, the school will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. Up to and until three terms before a pupil turns 16, if they wish to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide them with sex education during one of those terms, as set out in Government mandatory guidance (2019).

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

The programme is regularly monitored and evaluated. The views of pupils and teachers who deliver the programme are used to make changes and improvements to the programme on an ongoing basis.

Monitoring and evaluation can be informed by the Ofsted Framework for the Inspection of Schools and carried out by, for instance, auditing workbooks, sharing good classroom work and practice and observation of RSE delivered by staff.

### **How this Policy was developed**

This policy was produced by the Assistant Headteacher (leading on Personal Development). Staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations, parents/carers were invited to provide feedback on the policy and pupil voice was consulted about RSE content and means of delivery. Once amendments were made, the policy was shared with Governors and ratified.

This policy will be reviewed annually and will next be reviewed by the Assistant Headteacher (leading on Personal Development) **in 2026**.

If you have any questions please contact the school for further guidance.









