

Relationships & Sex Education Policy

Date reviewed: September 2026

Date of next review: September 2027



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. Ultimately, children will be given the essential knowledge that is needed to help them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships.

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 carefully sequenced and inclusive to support pupils' engagement.*
- *Be an entitlement for all young people.*
- *Ensure that all young people, including pupils with SEND, can access their learning effectively.*
- *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. Pupils will be given the information that they need to develop healthy, safe and nurturing relationships of all kinds.*
- *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 teach applicable law in a factual way so that pupils are clear about their rights and responsibilities as citizens.*
- *To teach the importance of equality and respect, including the law in relation to protected characteristics and British Values.*
- *To focus on respect for oneself and others and not to encourage or normalize early sexual experimentation.*
- *To ensure that, when teaching topics linked to abusive behaviour, teachers are clear that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child or young person.*
- *To help pupils acquire the skills, knowledge 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, including online and in person.

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

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.

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.

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

Some RSE is taught through the PSHE programme during form time and some through Science lessons and other curriculum areas.

RSE is delivered by Form Tutors

Form tutors are best placed to deliver RSE as they know pupils well as individuals and see pupils every day so can support them 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). 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.

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 personalised and adapted is the starting point of every learner 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 is 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.

PSHE - Years 7 to 11 Curriculum Overview

Our inclusive curriculum covers Personal Wellbeing, Relationships and Diversity, and Living in the Wider World, alongside Fundamental British Values and the Protected Characteristics.

Year	Curriculum section	Half term 1 Health & Wellbeing	Half term 2 Health & Wellbeing	Half term 3 Relationships	Half term 4 Relationships	Half term 5 Living in the wider world	Half term 6 Living in the wider world
YEAR 7	Knowledge & Skills	Transition to Secondary School and Belonging; Personal Identity and Self-Esteem; Growth Mindset and Resilience; Managing Emotions; Healthy Friendships; Bullying and Bystander Behaviour; Online Safety and Digital Footprints .	Screen Time and Healthy Habits; Mental Health Awareness; Coping Strategies and Help-Seeking; Physical Health and Healthy Lifestyles; Sleep and Wellbeing; Puberty and Changing Bodies.	Families and Different Family Structures; Positive Friendships; Boundaries and Personal Space; Respect and Kindness; Introduction to Consent; Conception, Pregnancy and Parenthood; Contraception and Pregnancy Prevention.	Sexual Health and STIs; Grooming and Exploitation; FGM - Rights, Safety and Seeking Help; Image Sharing and Online Safety; Media Influence and Body Image; Gender Stereotypes and Equality; Prejudice, Discrimination and Allyship.	Introduction to Financial Decision-Making; Budgeting and Saving Skills; Understanding Banks and Saving Accounts; Advertising, Influencers and Consumer Choices; Careers, Skills and Future Aspirations; Challenging Career Stereotypes and Broadening Horizons.	Rights, Responsibilities and the Law; Democracy, Elections and Having a Voice; Volunteering; Community Action and Social Responsibility; Environmental Responsibility and Sustainability; Online Citizenship and Responsible Digital Participation.
YEAR 8	Knowledge & Skills	Positive Identity and Personal Strengths; Self-Esteem and Confidence; Managing Emotions; Mental Health Awareness; Stress and Anxiety; Building Resilience; Healthy Sleep and Routines.	Healthy Lifestyles; Physical Activity and Fitness; Body Image and Media Influence; Online Wellbeing; Personal Safety and Risk; First Aid Awareness and Autumn Assessment.	Healthy Relationships; Friendship Skills; Respect and Equality; Communication Skills; Conflict Resolution; Consent; Personal Boundaries; Peer Pressure; Bullying and Cyberbullying .	Diversity and Inclusion; Stereotypes and Prejudice; Online Relationships; Grooming and Exploitation Awareness; Seeking Support and Trusted Adults; Spring Assessment and Reflection.	Rights, Responsibilities and the Law; British Values and Democracy; Media Literacy and Social Influence; Fake News, Algorithms and Misinformation; Careers and Aspirations; GCSE Pathways and Future Choices.	Employability Skills; Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Financial Education - Budgeting and Financial Planning; Banking, Saving, Credit and Debt; Consumer Awareness and Online Spending; Community Participation and Social Action; Preparing for Key Stage 4 and End of Year Reflection.
YEAR 9	Knowledge & Skills	Transition into Year 9 and Personal Development; Identity, Values and Personal Beliefs; Self-Esteem and Self-Concept; Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing; Managing Stress and Exam Pressure; Resilience and Growth Mindset; Healthy Sleep, Lifestyle and Balance.	Body Image, Appearance and Self-Worth; Healthy Coping Strategies; Risk Taking and Decision Making; Substance Awareness - Smoking and Vaping; Substance Awareness - Alcohol and Drugs; Autumn Assessment and Reflection .	Healthy Relationships Revisited; Relationship Expectations and Reality; Consent and Communication; Personal Boundaries and Respect; Recognising Unhealthy Relationships; Coercion, Control and Manipulation; Gender Stereotypes and Equality.	Sexual Harassment and Respectful Behaviour; Online Relationships and Digital Conduct; Sharing Images and Digital Consent; Contraception and Pregnancy Prevention; Exploitation and Grooming Awareness; Seeking Support and Trusted Adults; Spring Assessment and Reflection.	Rights, Responsibilities and the Law; British Values and Democracy; Media Literacy and Social Influence; Fake News, Algorithms and Misinformation; Careers, GCSE Pathways and Future Choices; Employability Skills.	Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Financial Education - Budgeting and Financial Planning; Banking, Saving, Credit and Debt; Consumer Awareness and Online Spending; Community Participation and Social Action; Preparing for Key Stage 4 and End of Year Reflection.
YEAR 10	Knowledge & Skills	Starting Year 10 and GCSE Success; Managing Workload and Study Skills; Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing; Stress, Anxiety and Burnout; Sleep, Lifestyle and Academic Performance.	Healthy Relationships with Social Media; Body Image and Media Influence; Addiction Awareness; Substance Misuse and Harm Reduction; Personal Safety and Risk; First Aid and Emergency Response; Autumn Assessment and Reflection.	Healthy Romantic Relationships; Communication and Conflict Resolution; Consent, Capacity and the Law; Contraception and Sexual Health; Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs); Relationship Expectations and Reality; Power, Control and Coercive Behaviour.	Domestic Abuse Awareness; Sexual Harassment and Bystander Intervention; Online Relationships and Digital Safety; Sharing Images, Sexting and the Law; Pornography and Unrealistic Expectations; Accessing Sexual Health Services and Support; Spring Assessment and Reflection.	Employment Rights and Responsibilities; Understanding Payslips, Tax and National Insurance; Banking, Credit Scores and Debt; Financial Scams and Online Fraud; Citizenship, Democracy and Social Action; Careers and Aspirations; GCSE Pathways and Future Choices.	Employability Skills; Enterprise, Entrepreneurship and Innovation; Financial Education - Budgeting and Financial Planning; Saving, Credit and Debt; Consumer Awareness and Online Spending; Community Participation and Social Action; Preparing for Key Stage 4 and End of Year Reflection.
YEAR 11	Knowledge & Skills	Students focus on preparing for Year 11 and GCSE success through goal setting, workload management, revision and organisation. They develop strategies to manage stress and anxiety, build resilience and maintain positive mental health. Healthy sleep, nutrition, exercise and daily routines are explored to support wellbeing and academic performance.	Students explore healthy relationships with family and friends, social media influence and body image. They examine addiction, substance misuse and associated risks, including alcohol, drugs, vaping and nicotine. First aid and emergency response are introduced, alongside an autumn assessment and reflection.	Students build understanding of romantic relationships, communication, conflict resolution, consent and the law. They learn about contraception, sexual health and STIs, and explore sexually transmitted infections, relationship expectations and the impact of power, control and coercion.	Students learn to recognise and respond to unhealthy relationships, domestic abuse and sexual harassment. Online relationships, digital safety, sharing images, sexting and the law are covered. Pornography and media influence are explored to challenge unrealistic expectations and promote respectful relationships.	Students develop knowledge of employment rights, payslips, tax, national insurance and banking. They build financial literacy, including credit, debt, scams and online fraud. Citizenship, democracy, social action, careers and aspirations are explored alongside future pathways and GCSE preparation.	Students focus on enterprise, financial planning, budgeting and saving. They consider consumer awareness, online spending and community participation. Preparation for Key Stage 4 completion and transition to post-16 options is supported through reflection and planning for the future .

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 professional 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, including how to deal with questions raised by pupils that relate to sex education from which the child has been withdrawn. 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, or designated Leader, 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. From three terms before that pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back in to sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. If this is the case, we will make arrangements to provide them with sex education during one of those terms, as set out in Government mandatory guidance (2019 and 2025).

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 2027**.

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

