



# Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)



Approved by	Headteacher	Date Approved	December 2025
Review cycle	Annual	Date of next review	September 2026

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### 1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Model how the four school values are fundamental to relationships and sex education.

### 2. Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to [DfE Statutory Guidance on Relationships and sex education and health education](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At Esher Church of England High School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

### 3. Policy development

#### Student Partnership

Students are regularly consulted about the PSHE and RSE content. Through the student council and directly in lessons, students review the curriculum and advise on what topics they feel are important and wish to

learn about. Evaluation forms are completed at the end of units and students can recommend areas for improvement.

### **Parental Partnership**

Review and consultation of the curriculum is one of the agenda items and this has resulted in parents contributing to the curriculum and addition of RSE units. The overview of the Personal Development (PSHE) and RSE curriculum is shared with all parents and available on the school website.

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – school staff were part of an audit to examine where key content was being delivered, to what standard and to what level of depth.
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

### **4. Definition.**

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is taught in an age-appropriate, evidence-informed and legally accurate way. It is not intended to encourage pupils to adopt any particular lifestyle or identity; it equips pupils with knowledge, language and skills to keep themselves and others safe and to build respectful relationships.

### **5. Curriculum**

The curriculum for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is delivered primarily through our Personal Development programme, and, where relevant, within Religious Studies. RSE is also reinforced through carefully planned contributions in other subjects, assemblies and our Culture Curriculum.

Within Personal Development, our programme is sequenced and age-appropriate. In Years 10 and 11 it is structured around three strands: healthy minds, healthy lifestyles and healthy relationships. Each strand is revisited across year groups with content that is progressively developed and appropriate to students' maturity and need.

Because safeguarding risks and the wider social context evolve, our RSE curriculum is reviewed and updated annually to remain aligned with the most current guidance from the Department for Education.

We have carried out a cross-curricular audit and developed our curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking account of students' age, needs and feelings, including the needs of students with SEND. Teaching is adapted as necessary to ensure content is accessible and meaningful for all students. If students ask questions beyond the planned content, staff respond in an appropriate, factual and age-appropriate way, and will signpost students to trusted sources of support, so that students are not left to seek information online.

Our curriculum includes statutory content (Relationships Education and Health Education) and sex education, which is delivered within the wider RSE programme. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education. Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from sex education delivered as part of RSE; the school will meet with parents to discuss such requests, and will make appropriate alternative arrangements for the student during those sessions.

Examples of content include:

- Statutory: respectful relationships, families, consent, and safeguarding topics such as Female Genital Mutilation (FGM).
- Sex education (withdrawable on request): contraception (including methods and effectiveness) and sexual activity.

Our RSE curriculum promotes dignity and respect for all, including respect for all protected characteristics, and ensures compliance with the Equality Act 2010. This policy has regard to the DfE statutory guidance for Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education (as applicable to teaching until 31 August 2026), and is designed to ensure all students receive age-appropriate, inclusive and comprehensive learning.

For more information about our curriculum, see our curriculum map in Appendix 1.

## **6. Delivery of RSE**

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families and parenting
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Safeguarding note: delivery of content is done so in a safe learning environment with clear ground rules and signposting to pastoral support. Teaching will be of age-appropriate and will safeguard pupils from inappropriate content.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

## **Lesson Organisation**

RSE is coordinated by the Head of RE who will work with Heads of Year and relevant Heads of Department to embed the aims of the course throughout the whole-school curriculum. The Head of RE is responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the content.

Most RSE content is delivered to students during their scheduled tutor times and assembly, as part of the Personal Development program. Highly-sensitive material is taught by specialists in the RE department during timetabled lessons during KS4. This is due to the nature of the topics being explicitly linked to their GCSE RS course i.e. (Life after death, Relationships, and Human Rights).

The programme is taught mainly through the Science, RE and Personal Social Health and Citizenship Education programmes, although some of the emotional, ethical and moral content of the course may be re-visited in other curriculum areas, such as English, History. RSE is taught in mixed ability and gender groups in discrete lessons throughout the school from year 7 -11 with dedicated units given throughout the school year. For specific topics such as FGM, the groups may be single-sex.

Schemes of work all evidence the variety of resources and approaches used in delivering RSE and student voice features heavily in feedback and evaluation of these.

Training and support are offered to the staff who are delivering the content and the Head of RE also takes on responsibility in delivering the sensitive topics. A wide range of materials are available to members of staff in delivering the topics. Staff involved in teaching sex education will do so within the framework of the school aims for the subject. Wherever appropriate outside speakers are invited to school and these take the form of talks or theatrical performances. They are selected carefully and a member of school staff is always present.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example: looked after children or young carers).

## **7. Roles and responsibilities**

### **7.1 The local governing body**

The governing body will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

### **7.2 The Headteacher**

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 8).

### **7.3 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE
- Communicating to parents in advance of sex education lessons and be given resources to support learning from home.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

David Elliott – Head of RE is responsible for teaching RSE and the members of the RE Department.

### **7.4 Pupils**

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

### 8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

- Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.
- A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.
- The headteacher will invite the parents in for a meeting to discuss reasons for withdrawal and ways in which parents will deliver RSE to their children.
- Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

### 9. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

### 10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by David Elliott – Head of RE and the pastoral team through:

- Book looks, learning walks, observations and student feedback forms.
- Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers and tutors as part of our internal assessment systems.
- Impact will be assessed through pupil voice, feedback and progress against PSHE learning outcomes.
- This policy will be reviewed by Head of RE annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body and Headteacher.

### 11. Components to be added to the RSE curriculum

**Our RSE offering reflects the following guidance and feedback:**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education 2025
- Parents Forum (2025), Student Forum (2025)
- Subject Audit (2025)

As a result, the following components, which are not already part of the programs, have been added to the RSE and Personal Development programs to start in September 2026:

Healthy Minds	Healthy lifestyles	Healthy relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• AI Deepfakes</li> <li>• Loneliness</li> <li>• Challenging stereotypes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anti-discrimination</li> <li>• Gender-reassignment rights</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Misogyny</li> <li>• Violence against women and girls</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gynaecological&amp; Reproductive Health</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Toxic influencers and subcultures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Damaging impact of Pornography</li></ul>
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*Reviewed December 2025 by: DEL (HoD RE) and BAL (DHT)*

**Appendix 1 – Curriculum Map for Personal Development which includes RSE content (Current Mapping for 25/26):**

	<b>Healthy Minds</b>	<b>Healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>Healthy relationships</b>
<b>Year 7</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identity, Community and Fundamental British Values</li> <li>• Introduction to Mental Health</li> <li>• Mindfulness</li> <li>• Social Media and Self-Esteem</li> <li>• Self-confidence</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Food groups, labels, hazards</li> <li>• Energy Drinks</li> <li>• Exercise and keeping healthy</li> <li>• Dental Hygiene</li> <li>• Personal Safety: Road, railway and water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendships and loneliness</li> <li>• Consent (KS3)</li> <li>• Peer Pressure</li> <li>• Managing Conflict</li> <li>• Exam preparation (Y7)</li> </ul>
<b>Year 8</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managing Anger</li> <li>• Communication Skills</li> <li>• How will I change?</li> <li>• Body Image</li> <li>• Teens in the media</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keeping Clean – Germs and bacteria</li> <li>• Smoking and vaping</li> <li>• Drugs: illegal and prescription</li> <li>• Screen Time</li> <li>• First Aid</li> <li>• Financial Literacy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Online safety: Gaming and gambling</li> <li>• Child Exploitation</li> <li>• Harassment and stalking</li> <li>• Sexting/ nude and semi-nude image sharing / youth-produced sexual imagery</li> <li>• Exam preparation (Y8)</li> <li>• Social justice</li> </ul>
<b>Year 9</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional Literacy</li> <li>• Self-harm</li> <li>• Eating disorders</li> <li>• Selfies</li> <li>• Self-discipline and taking control</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alcoholism</li> <li>• Online safety: AI / Drugs and knife supply</li> <li>• Our relationship with influencers</li> <li>• Choosing a career</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship</li> <li>• Law and the justice system</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic violence</li> <li>• Forced marriages</li> <li>• Consent</li> <li>• Exam preparation (Y9)</li> </ul>
<b>Year 10</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping with stress</li> <li>• Suicide awareness</li> <li>• Sexism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substance Abuse: Personal and legal</li> <li>• Cancer: Prevention and checking</li> <li>• Defibrillators</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pregnancy (including IVF)</li> <li>• Parenting and the early years</li> <li>• Intimacy</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Revenge Porn</b></li> <li>• <b>Social Anxiety</b></li> <li>• <b>Euthanasia (GCSE RS)</b></li> <li>• <b>Bereavement (GCSE RS)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CV and cover letters</b></li> <li>• <b>Time management and sending emails</b></li> <li>• <b>Abortion (GCSE RS)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Mind and memory (sex)</b></li> <li>• <b>Marriage and divorce (GCSE RS)</b></li> <li>• <b>Sex and contraception (GCSE RS)</b></li> <li>• <b>Relationships (GCSE RS)</b></li> </ul>
<b>Year 11</b>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Crime and punishment (GCSE RS)</b></li> <li>• <b>Equality: Poverty (GCSE RS)</b></li> <li>• <b>FGM (GCSE RS)</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Equality and Human Rights (GCSE RS)</b></li> </ul>

- All topics are supported using relevant websites and organisations, PowerPoints, videos and discussion-based materials
- All topics are taught during Personal Development and/RE lessons
- Branches of Personal Development are arranged according to the 2025 PSHE Audit to ensure all elements of PSHE/RSE are fulfilled at an appropriate age.
- All topics of a sensitive or controversial nature are delivered with signposting to specialist members of the Pastoral Team or Senior Leadership, for safeguarding purposes.
- All topics of a sensitive or controversial nature are delivered with expectations to ensure that the topic is delivered in a safe, sensitive and appropriate manner.
- Teachers within the RE department are provided with additional CPD to ensure that all topics taught within the RE curriculum are supported well by trained staff and managed appropriately.

**Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know**

TOPIC	WHAT PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Healthy relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Characteristics of positive, respectful relationships (trust, honesty, kindness, integrity, resilience).</li> <li>• How healthy friendships and partnerships contribute to wellbeing and self-respect.</li> <li>• Recognising unhealthy or abusive relationships and their impact on mental and physical health.</li> <li>• The importance of boundaries, consent, and mutual respect in all relationships.</li> <li>• How to resist pressure to have sex and avoid pressuring others.</li> <li>• The role of communication skills in resolving conflict and maintaining respect.</li> <li>• Understanding different types of relationships (family, friendships, romantic, professional).</li> <li>• How to seek support if relationships become unsafe or harmful.</li> <li>• The impact of peer influence and social norms on behaviour and choices.</li> </ul>
Online and the media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How online behaviour affects relationships, reputation, and self-image.</li> <li>• The risks of pornography and unrealistic media portrayals of sex and relationships.</li> <li>• Understanding misogyny, toxic influencers, and harmful online subcultures.</li> <li>• Critical evaluation of online content: spotting misinformation, manipulation, and bias.</li> <li>• The law around online behaviour, harassment, and illegal content.</li> <li>• How social media can positively and negatively influence wellbeing.</li> <li>• The permanence of online activity and its impact on future opportunities.</li> <li>• Strategies for safe, responsible, and respectful online communication.</li> <li>• Awareness of AI deepfakes and emerging digital risks.</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The law relating to consent, exploitation, harassment, and abuse.</li> <li>• Recognising unsafe situations and knowing how to seek help.</li> <li>• Awareness of sexual harassment, sexual violence, and safeguarding risks.</li> <li>• Understanding coercion, grooming, and exploitation, including online.</li> <li>• Personal safety in public spaces, including risks linked to drugs, alcohol, and peer pressure.</li> <li>• How to report concerns and the importance of trusted adults and services.</li> <li>• Balancing confidentiality with safeguarding responsibilities.</li> <li>• Awareness of road, rail, and water safety as part of personal protection.</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Building confidence to challenge unsafe or discriminatory behaviour.</li></ul>
Intimate and Sexual relationships (including sexual health)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Facts about human sexuality, sexual orientation, and gender identity, taught inclusively.</li><li>• Knowledge of contraception methods and how to access them.</li><li>• Understanding of STIs, pregnancy, miscarriage, and safer sex practices.</li><li>• The importance of consent, readiness, and informed choice in sexual activity.</li><li>• Reasons for delaying sexual activity and how to make healthy, respectful decisions.</li><li>• Equal opportunity to learn about stable same-sex relationships.</li><li>• How to access sexual health services and advice.</li><li>• The impact of pornography and unrealistic expectations on sexual behaviour.</li><li>• Delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, encouraging safe questions and discussion.</li></ul>



### Appendix 3: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE



Parents/carers may request withdrawal only from the sex education elements of the school's Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) programme. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, which are statutory.

Where a withdrawal request is agreed, the school will make appropriate, purposeful educational arrangements for the student during the relevant sex education sessions.

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
As part of this process, the school may, where appropriate, speak with the student to understand their views and wishes, in an age-appropriate way, before confirming arrangements.			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	
Student voice record	