



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Responsibility	Quality of Education and Students, Parents and Community Committees	
Status	Statutory	
Ratification date	01 and 09 10 2025	
Review cycle / date	1	Summer 2026 after stakeholder consultation
Reference	003	

Contents

1. Introduction / Rationale & Ethos	3
2. Aims	3
3. Statutory Guidance	4
4. Links with other Policies	4
5. Curriculum Design	5
a. Involving Parents and Carers	6
6. Roles and Responsibilities	8
Head Teacher	8
Staff	8
Parents	9
7. Right to be Excused from RSE	9
8. Working with External Agencies	9
9. Training	10

1. Introduction / Rationale & Ethos

This policy covers our school's approach to delivering effective and insightful Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) as part of our PSHCE (Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education) curriculum. Here at The Richmond Upon Thames School (RTS), we are dedicated to enabling each individual student to become an active member of society and excel in their future endeavours when they finish their secondary school education journey.

We believe RSE is important for our students and our school. Growing up in a complex 21st century society that is forever changing and expanding, students should be able to know, understand and have the right to know what is and is not acceptable, as well as how to be safe within friendships and relationships.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, 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 not about the promotion of sexual activity

RTS values the partnership of home and school, meaning that we have ensured all perspectives have been listened to and incorporated into our RSE curriculum, including staff members, students and parents.

2. Aims

We believe Relationship and Sex Education is important for our students and our school because of the forever changing society that we live in, meaning that students have a duty and responsibility for maintaining a healthy and positive friendship and relationship, as well as acknowledging and acting effectively upon negative and inappropriate behaviour within friendship and relationships.

With this, the intended outcomes of our programme are that students will:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Know and understand what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, good colleague and successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of committed relationship.
- Understand they have a right to engage positively with others, whether it be with a friend or partner, as well as show respect towards different issues, beliefs and viewpoints.
- Understand they have a responsibility to know and understand contraception, how to remain safe online, develop intimate relationships and resist pressure to have sex (and not apply pressure).
- Develop the skills to identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- Develop the attributes of how relationships can have an effect on their mental wellbeing..

We will ensure that our RSE curriculum meets the needs of all our students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), as well as those who may identify themselves as part of the LGBT+ community whilst also showing equality to all genders by:

- promoting spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school and of society
- Preparing students at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

3. Statutory Guidance

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Revised Department for Education statutory guidance states that from September 2020, all schools must deliver Relationships Education (in primary schools) and Relationships and Sex Education (in secondary schools).

The RSE policy supports, as well as complements the following policies:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance TSE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education - Statutory Safeguarding Guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)

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

- Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with trustees and ratified.

4. Links with other Policies

This policy should be read in alliance with the following RTS policies:

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Procedure
- Equality Policy
- Online Safety Policy

Our RSE policy is part of our approach to ensure there is support for the health and well being of our RTS students.

5. Curriculum Design

Our RSE programme is an integral part of our whole school PSHE curriculum and will cover the 5 main topics:

- Families
- Respectful Relationships, including Friendships
- Online and Media
- Being Safe
- Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health

As part of the PSHE curriculum, students from year 7 - 11 will be taught 1 hour per cycle within their teaching groups. The following actions will be in place for all staff and student to create an environment of trust and respect:

- Teachers and students set ground rules where they are able to discuss topics with respect.
- Teachers creating a safe and calming atmosphere where students will be able to feel free to ask questions, raise and discuss concerns, talk freely and openly about relationships, yet not discuss personal experiences or issues, nor ask information of each other or the teacher (students will be made aware that any issues or concerns they have may be discussed privately with the teacher or necessary member of the pastoral team).
- Teachers answer questions honestly, sensitively and appropriately according to the year group and maturity they are teaching.
- Necessary resources used to allow the students the best possible information and guidance, this will include film clips, TED talks, case studies and leaflets designed appropriately to the year group and maturity of the class. There will also be opportunities for the school nurse to deliver necessary sessions.
- Students benefit from having different lessons delivered with different teaching styles, therefore, allowing students to participate and reflect on their learning and knowledge through the use of quizzes, pair and group work, class discussions.
- RSE sessions being differentiated and amended to suit the needs and abilities of the class, with some cases even having a LSA to help deliver the specific session.
- Differentiation being used in order for the teacher to ensure that the content, approach and language reflect the diversity of the RTS community, helping students feel valued and included regardless of their gender identity, sexuality, ability, disability, family and cultural background.
- Students reflect on their own learning and progress through the use of e-books, where students can make effective notes on pieces of information, as well as google forms and quizzes.
- Teachers ensuring that discriminatory behaviour and language will not be tolerated and will be challenged and dealt with using our necessary behaviour policy.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

a. Involving Parents and Carers

During Spring 2020 parents, students and staff were consulted on the SRE curriculum; through a parent forum and working groups. An overview of the SRE curriculum across both Key Stages has been developed.

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Section 5b but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

b. RSE Topics

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Topics					
Year Group	Topic: <i>Families</i>	Topic: <i>Respectful Relationships & Friendships</i>	Topic: <i>Online & Media</i>	Topic: <i>Being Safe</i>	Topic: <i>Intimate & Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health</i>
Year 7	Different types of families. Stable relationship within a family. Roles & responsibilities.	Introduction to what makes a positive friendship. How to manage confrontations within friendships. Stereotypes and why they exist.	Cyberbullying. Introduction to digital footprint. The risks of being online. Principles of being online. The importance of privacy.	Introduction to grooming. How to keep safe within friendships. Individuals are in control of their own body and actions.	Introduction to puberty (linked to Science curriculum). Characteristics and positive impact on intimate relationships.
Year 8	Meaning of marriage. Different cultural views on marriage. Sense of security. Seeking help if problems occur.	Importance of sensitivity. How friendships and relationships can impact your behaviour.	Introduction to explicit websites. Your rights and responsibilities with what you post and share.	How to respond to forceful relationships. Meaning behind sexual harassment. Introduction to friendship and	Changes towards the body (linked to Science curriculum). Introduction to pregnancy.

Topics					
Year Group	Topic: <i>Families</i>	Topic: <i>Respectful Relationships & Friendships</i>	Topic: <i>Online & Media</i>	Topic: <i>Being Safe</i>	Topic: <i>Intimate & Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health</i>
		Identifying when a friendship or relationship has run its course.	Who to confide in if you experience online negativity. Assessing online friendships.	relationship consent.	Impact on drug substance and sexual activity.
Year 9	Meaning of having children. Legal impacts of marriage. Introduction to varying family arrangements and stereotypes.	Introduction to Equal Rights Act (2010). Sexual harassment. General consent. How relationships and friendships can impact mental health and wellbeing.	Law, Government and organisations use of personal detail. Online impacting mental health and wellbeing and what you can do.	Meaning behind sexual consent. Laws on being safe in relationships. Introduction to domestic abuse and rape. Being smart in surroundings.	Your right to choose with regard to sexual activity. LGBTQ+ community. Introduction to sexual health - safe sex. The meaning behind sexual intimacy.
Year 10	Legal guardians. Young families. Observe case studies. Respect other views on family.	How to deal with toxic relationships. Observing case studies. Respecting different people.	Keeping others safe online. The government's use of data. How to say no when online.	Different cultural views. Respecting different cultural views. Who to confide in if there is a concern for domestic abuse.	Pregnancy and miscarriages. The support that is available. Different views on sexual identity. How to respect that people are different.
Year 11	Young families. The meaning of a 21st century family.	Permission seeking. Friendships & relationships evolving over time.	Fraud & identity theft. Social Media can impact job opportunities.	Different forms of sexual harassment. Impact on mental health.	Impact of teen pregnancy. Understanding pleasure activity.

c. Inclusivity

RSE topics are taught in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel safe, supported and able to engage with the key messages

RSE is taught in an environment that's appropriate, for example in:

- o A whole-class setting
- o Small groups or targeted sessions

- o 1-to-1 discussions
- o Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

d. Use of resources

RSE lessons will have a variety of resources which are considered before use to be:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

RSE is taught in an environment that's appropriate, for example in:

- A whole-class setting
- Small groups or targeted sessions
- 1-to-1 discussions
- Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

6. Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees will approve the RSE policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

Head Teacher

The Head Teacher at RTS will ensure that:

- Staff are informed about the policy as well as know their responsibilities within the policy.
- RSE is monitored, analysed and adapted where necessary to ensure that the delivery is to the highest standards and meets the needs of all students, including those with SEND.
- RTS works alongside parents and carers in creating and planning RSE lessons that will be delivered to students, as well as
- Parents are kept up to date on the information that is delivered with RSE lessons as well as understand their right to request that their child is withdrawn from specific elements of RSE.

Staff

All Staff at RTS will ensure that:

- Ground rules will be established with students within the lessons to ensure it is a safe space.
- Students know where they can get support and speak in confidence (without fear, embarrassment or anxiety) to specific staff members if they find the content of the lesson sensitive.
- All students are given the opportunity to explore different interpretations, situations and ideas in an environment that offers confidence and support.
- All points of view are expressed in an unbiased way.
- Inappropriate personal advice will not be given to students, such as contraception.
- The sessions of RSE that are delivered are accessible to all students.
- The issues of stereotyping and the consequences that lead to that.
- Where a student has stated an action that places them at risk, the staff member will ensure the student is aware of the implications of their behaviour as well as refer any concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Parents

All parents will be given the right to:

- The materials that the school will be using to deliver the RSE sessions to students, enabling parents the opportunity to discuss the topic with their children.
- Discuss concerns they have about their child with the school, and gain support from RTS when/if they need it.

7. Right to be Excused from RSE

The parental right to withdraw students from RSE remains in primary and secondary education only for the Sex Education elements of 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. However, where Sex Education elements apply to the Science Curriculum, there is no right to withdraw from this.

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health or Relationships Education, nor from the PSHE curriculum.

There continues to be no right to withdraw from the National Curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the head teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The head teacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

8. Working with External Agencies

At RTS, we take pride in giving students the best opportunity to receive the necessary information and knowledge throughout their education, this includes providing opportunities for students to be given lectures and sessions from External Agencies.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on what they're going to say and their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We **will not**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

We always ensure that:

- Credentials of the company and visitors are checked before the visit takes place.
- Understand the aspects of confidentiality and to deal effectively if a Safeguarding incident arises, ensuring it is in line with our policy.

With there being a wide variety of External Companies who deliver a range of different topics, RTS would find the best sessions that would enhance the students' knowledge and understanding for RSE.

RTS would ensure that the External Companies sessions are:

- Age appropriate for the different year groups.
- Fitting alongside the RSE curriculum that is delivered at RTS.
- Analysed before the delivery of the session, including the approval of any material being used within the session.

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 Head Teacher 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.