

## RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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### 1. Rationale and Aim

Etonbury Academy believes that relationship and sex education is an integral entitlement of all students, and an integral part of each student's development, in preparation for adolescence and puberty and dealing with present and future relationships. It is embedded within the Personal Development education (PD) curriculum and complies with the requirements of the [DfE Relationship and Sex Education Guidance 2000](#).

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) describes the teaching and learning we offer to the young people in our academies, helping them to understand their own and others sexuality and to develop skills for relationships and informed decision making. We believe that RSE is the entitlement of all young people and are committed to deliver it within the context of a broad and balanced programme of health education underpinned by values promoting equality and respect.

Our aims are:

- To ensure that RSE is integrated into the curriculum and not isolated, taken out of context or over emphasised in any way.
- To foster self esteem and respect for others as the cornerstone of good health education and of therefore good sex and relationships education.

- To encourage personal responsibility in all forms of behaviour
- To encourage self esteem.
- To encourage respect and consideration for others.
- To provide support and information for young people and their parents.
- To provide clear facts concerning sexual matters.
- To generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without embarrassment.
- To give the students the skills for dealing with their relationships they may experience in later life.
- To ensure that students feel safe and able to discuss their sexuality with others confidently.
- To ensure that students with SEND feel able to contribute and feel that they are in an inclusive environment when discussing RSE and its responsibilities.

The aim of this policy is to clearly communicate to staff, governors, parents, visitors and students the manner in which RSE will be delivered in this school.

*Consultation for the academic year 2025/2026 ran for two week up to 30th May 2025*

## **2. Legislation and guidance**

- According to the new guidance issued by the Department for Education (DfE), Relationships Education will be mandatory in secondary schools starting September 2020.*
- As a secondary academy, we are required to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to all students in accordance with section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.*
- When delivering RSE, we must follow the guidance set out by the Secretary of State as detailed in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.*
- Additionally, Health Education is compulsory for all state-funded schools.*
- Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from certain or all sex education components within the statutory RSE curriculum.*
- Schools are also required to engage parents in consultations about the implementation of the RSE policy.*

We aim to offer students a carefully planned and differentiated programme on RSE that will be taught through specific PD lessons and form time sessions. Each year, the topics and themes will be expanded and explored in greater depth to build on student learning.

Please be mindful that the context of lessons will vary throughout the Keys Stages and will be appropriate to age. We are aware of and value the learning that takes place within the home and feel that this, along with school links, will provide knowledge, skills and attitudes which will allow the students to manage their lives in a responsible and healthy way. It is important to involve, inform and educate parents when necessary offering support and guidance where required.

This policy reflects the requirements of Relationship and Sex Education Guidance.

This policy applies to governors, teachers, support staff, parents/ carers and visitors to the school.

#### 4. Subject overview

Within the context of talking about relationships, children will be taught about a wide range of relationships, including same sex, and different family arrangements, emphasising the positive qualities of family life in all its forms. They must be taught to recognise the need for commitment, trust and love in meaningful relationships.

The content of RSE is taught through five main topics and below is a summary of the Department for Education's statutory requirements for RSE with the content requirements:

<p><b>Families</b></p>	<p>By the end of Secondary school pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li> <li>• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.</li> <li>• what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.</li> <li>• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li> <li>• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li> <li>• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.</li> <li>• how to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy.</li> <li>• judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to</li> </ul>
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	<p>recognise this in others' relationships)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.</li></ul>
<b>Respectful relationships (including friendships)</b>	<p>By the end of Secondary school pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li><li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li><li>• how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).</li><li>• that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.</li><li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li><li>• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li><li>• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li><li>• the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.</li></ul>
<b>Online and media</b>	<p>By the end of Secondary school pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</li><li>• about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.</li><li>• not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.</li><li>• what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.</li></ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the impact of viewing harmful content.</li><li>• that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.</li><li>• that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</li><li>• how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</li></ul>
<b>Being safe</b>	<p>By the end of Secondary school pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.</li><li>• how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).</li></ul>
<b>Intimate and sexual relationships (including sexual health)</b>	<p>By the end of Secondary school pupils should know:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.</li><li>• that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.</li><li>• the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.</li><li>• that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressuring others.</li><li>• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li><li>• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li><li>• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li><li>• that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).</li></ul>

- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

The school will establish a curriculum that is age-appropriate and developmentally suitable, addressing the needs of pupils and incorporating the statutory content outlined in this section of this policy.

Please click here for the school RSE curriculum [\(link to website\)](#)

Please click here for the school Personal Development (PD) curriculum [\(link to website\)](#)

## **5. Organisation**

RSE is delivered within the Personal Development (PD) curriculum, taught both during form time and an one hour fortnightly lesson. It sensitively covers a wide range of age appropriate topics/scenarios that are important in the current landscape.

The framework of RSE is essential to ensure continuity and progression for each student. The work is mainly planned by the PD coordinator, but the Head of Science is responsible for the Sex Education taught through the Science curriculum.

- Delivery is through planned aspects within the Science and PD curriculum, addressing moral and ethical issues, which may arise from apparently unrelated topics in all National Curriculum subjects.
- A variety of teaching approaches are used to give students relevant information, to enable discussions and to acquire appropriate skills.

## **6. Staff responsibility**

**Staff are responsible for:**

- i. **Delivering PSHE and RSE with sensitivity and care**
- ii. **Demonstrating positive attitudes and behaviours towards PSHE and RSE**

- iii. **Adapting to meet the individual needs of pupils**
- iv. **Respecting and appropriately managing situations where parents choose to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE**

## **7. Pupils**

Pupils are expected to attend sex education classes that are in their school timetable and take them seriously. Although they are not assessed through examination, these classes are still a very important part of the curriculum and a tool to aid personal development and the school expects pupils to recognise this.

Pupils should support one another with issues that arise through RSE. Listening in class, being considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs, and complying with confidentiality rules that are set in class are key to effective provision. Pupils who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the [school behaviour policy](#) (please see behaviour policy for more information).

## **8. Safeguarding and Confidentiality**

We hope that pupils will feel safe in the school environment to talk to any member of staff in confidence about any areas of concern regarding their personal, social and emotional development, including matters raised by or relating to sex education. We promote the school ethos as one of inclusion and acceptance throughout all areas of school activity and hope that pupils respond to this by feeling comfortable to ask questions and continue their learning both in and outside of the classroom.

We hope to provide a safe and supportive school community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Conversations of this nature between staff and pupils will be held in confidence; however, if staff have any safeguarding concerns they need to report them to the schools safeguarding officers by logging any concerns on CPOM's.

## **9. Confidentiality**

As a general rule a child's confidentiality is maintained by the teacher or member of staff concerned, however the school cannot offer unconditional confidentiality due to safeguarding.

RSE discussions may prompt a pupil to disclose about related incidents; for example, FGM, forced marriage, child exploitation or abuse. If a member of staff believes that a child is at risk or in danger or has concerns about any information disclosed, she/he talks to the designated safeguarding lead who will take action as laid down in the Child Protection Policy. If we have any reason to believe a student is a risk or there are any safeguarding issues, we are required by law to refer the matter to the



school's DSLs, (Designated Safeguarding Leads), who will take over the management of the process.

In any case where safeguarding procedures are followed, the school will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first. Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student.

All staff are familiar with the policy and know the identity of the member of staff with responsibility for Child Protection issues along with logging any concerns on CPOM's.

## **10. Equality & accessibility**

Under the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against pupils because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation.

RSE lessons provide a good background for talking openly and freely about the diversity of personal, social and sexual preferences. Prejudiced views will be challenged and equality promoted. Any bullying that relates to sexual behaviour or perceived sexual orientation will be dealt with swiftly and seriously. This is the case for bullying of any kind and the procedures regarding this are outlined in the school's behaviour policy, which can be found on our website.

The school will take into account pupils' backgrounds, gender, age range, and individual needs, and will consider whether additional support is required for certain pupils based on their protected characteristics.

The RSE curriculum will be designed to be inclusive of all pupils. The school recognises that some pupils—such as those with SEND or those who identify as LGBTQ+—may be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying, or other challenges. Teachers will be prepared to adapt their planning and liaise with the SENCO when necessary to ensure the curriculum is accessible and appropriate for pupils with SEND.

When curriculum content needs to be tailored to suit pupils at different stages of development, the school will ensure it is delivered in a way that is sensitive, age-appropriate, and legally compliant.

## **11. Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

The school works hard to ensure that all aspects of the school curriculum are inclusive and support the needs of pupils of all ranges of abilities. RSE must be accessible for all pupils including those with SEND and preparing students for adulthood outcomes. Please view our [SEN policy](#), which can be found on our website.

Therefore staff will differentiate lessons to tailor content to meet the specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages while ensuring their teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate.

The school will use a variety of different strategies to ensure that all pupils have access to the same information. Some of these include:

- interactive teaching methods e.g. contraceptive card game
- use of expert guest speakers
- practical activities
- using DVDs or video
- group and paired activities.

Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and are less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the SENDCO to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

## **12. Parents and carers partnerships**

The school expects parents to share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development. We encourage parents to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through school PD lessons. Parents are also encouraged to seek additional support in this from the school where they feel it is needed.

Etonbury values and encourages partnership with parents. Parents do have the right to withdraw their child from the RSE delivered through PD lessons but this does not extend to the Sex Education taught as part of the science curriculum.

## **13. Parents and carers consultation**

Parents will be consulted after the RSE curriculum has been reviewed. The RSE policy and curriculum outline is available on the schools website throughout the academic year to ensure prospective parents are fully informed.

During the consultation period, parents will be invited to contribute, ask questions, and raise any concerns. If a concern cannot be resolved by the headteacher or staff during this process, parents may contact the school governors for further support.

## **14. Working with external agencies**

The school will collaborate with external agencies to enrich the delivery of RSE, drawing on specialist expertise and varied approaches to engage pupils. External professionals may be invited to contribute

to either RSE lessons or delivery assemblies; however, they must adhere to the principles and

When engaging external agencies, the school will ensure that:

- A qualified teacher is present during all sessions delivered by visitors.
- Visitors receive a copy of this policy and are expected to follow its guidelines.
- The content delivered aligns with the school's planned RSE curriculum and complies with this policy.
- The credentials of external experts are verified in accordance with the school's Visitor Policy.
- Lesson plans are age-appropriate, accessible, and tailored to meet the developmental needs of the pupils.
- All materials and plans are inclusive and suitable for pupils with SEND.
- Confidentiality protocols are followed, including ensuring that external speakers understand and comply with safeguarding procedures as outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- External contributors support and enhance lessons led by school staff; they are not used as a substitute for teaching by qualified staff.

## **15. Monitoring, review and evaluation**

The educational and personal needs of our pupils develop in line with varying societal pressures and economic change. Our aim is to provide RSE that is relevant and tailored to meet the needs of our pupils, depending on their age and stage of personal development. For this reason we review the RSE curriculum yearly, and will inform parents of any revisions to the school policy or RSE curriculum.

The school will review this policy annually, evaluating its effectiveness by taking into account feedback from pupils, staff and parents, as well as what has come to light through classroom observations and information we receive from national reports and curriculum reviews.

## **16. Useful resources**

PSHE Association RSE Policy Guidance

[Writing your RSE policy: guidance from the PSHE Association \(pshe-association.org.uk\)](https://www.pshe-association.org.uk) (members only)

The Sex Education Forum RSE Policy Guidance

[SRE policy guidance | sexeducationforum.org.uk](https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk)