

RELATIONSHIPS, SEX & HEALTH EDUCATION (RSE & HE) POLICY

Approved by:

Mr Tim Foster - Rushden Academy Chair of Governors

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1. Intent

This policy covers Rushden Academy's approach to the teaching of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (HE), as well as all other Personal Development learning further to these Statutory requirements. At Rushden Academy we provide opportunities for our pupils to gain knowledge and skills so that they can succeed and be highly successful citizens in modern Britain. We endeavour to make their learning experiences fun and relevant to real life situations. We aim to reach out to our community and beyond to celebrate local traditions and explore all possibilities to enrich their lives.

2. Definitions

Relationships and Sex Education involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, and the law surrounding these topics. It is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

The school's programme of Relationships and sex education aims to:

- Give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- Enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like, including peer-on-peer relationships, and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- Inform pupils about contraception, sexual health, developing intimate relationships and resisting and not applying pressure to have sex.
- Help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- Teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.

Health Education is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, including physical and mental wellbeing, healthy lifestyles, and the laws surrounding smoking, drugs and alcohol. It aims to:

- Teach pupils about physical health and mental wellbeing.
- Provide them the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing.
- Enable them to recognise what is normal and what is an issue in themselves and others.

3. Statutory requirements

This policy reflects the statutory requirements for all schools to provide RSE and HE from September 2020 as per [Relationships education, relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education \(2019\)](#). It also reflects proposed changes to the RSE curriculum which are yet to become statutory guidance, as per [Draft Relationships education, relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education \(2024\)](#). It also reflects requirements for inclusion and equality as set out in the [Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice 2014](#), [Equality Act 2010](#), and [The Online Safety Act 2023](#).

4. The Right to withdraw

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Pupils are not able to request to withdraw. Parents do not have the right to withdraw their pupils from topics taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction. Parents do not have the right to request withdrawal from relationships education.

Encouraging students to be able to safeguard themselves requires young people to understand different parts of the body, but this does not include descriptions of sexual activity, this will not be taught within the RSE or HE curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the Principal.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Principal will discuss the request with parents or carers and may select to also speak with the student before and taking appropriate action. This is likely to include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate.

In line with government guidance, the principal will only refuse a request in exceptional circumstances, for example because of a pupil's specific vulnerability.

From three terms before the pupil turns 16, a pupil can choose to opt back into sex education even if their parent has requested withdrawal. For example, if a pupil turns 16 during the autumn term, the pupil can opt back into sex education at any time after the start of the previous autumn term.

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 The governing board

The Governing Board will approve this policy and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

5.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to, and ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school. They will ensure that the amount of time provided for teaching the required elements of the RSE and HE curriculum is adequate, and will manage requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory and non- science components of RSE (See section 4).

5.3 Other staff

Other staff are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the RSE and HE curriculum is implemented in accordance with this policy
- Delivering RSE and HE in a sensitive way
- Modelling Positive attitudes towards RSE
- Ensuring that proper provision is in place for pupils with different abilities and needs, including children with SEN

5.4 Pupils

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

6. Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Through RSE and HE, the Academy can play an important role in preventative education and keeping our pupils safe. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. Staff are also aware of the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality,

and should follow the Safeguarding Policy in the event of disclosures. All staff must be aware of their statutory duties in relation to our Child Protection Policy.

7. Organisation and planning

Pupils in Key Stage 3 and 4 follow a Personal Development programme that includes statutory RSE and HE, careers, citizenship, spiritual, personal, social education and British Values which is delivered through faculties, form time, PSHE lessons, and Personal Development days or opportunities. Personal Development days or opportunities take place throughout the year for all year groups. These days allow pupils to look at areas of the extended curriculum for longer periods of time and in more depth.

Pupils in KS5 follow a similar programme to pupils in KS4 but this is delivered through a timetabled session every week, delivered by their personal mentor, complemented by bespoke assemblies and workshops.

8. Teaching strategies and staff training

Teaching will reflect the law (including the Equality Act 2010) as it applies to relationships, so that young people clearly understand what the law allows and does not allow, and the wider legal implications of decisions they may make. Pupils should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

It is good practice to set out ground rules to help create a safe environment in which pupils do not feel anxious or embarrassed by ensuring the following:

- teachers /health professionals will not have to answer personal questions
- no pupil will be forced to take part in a discussion
- pupils will be encouraged to use the correct name for body parts
- meaning of words will be explained in a factual way
- Teachers will use distancing techniques which involve de-personalising discussion and using fictional and distanced examples to present different situations.

Teachers will be given training on how to respond to difficult questions and set appropriate ground rules if they require it, and specific key topics when necessary. Teachers are in a position of trust and are expected to work within the agreed parameters of this document.

9. Inclusion and Equality

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).

The Academy will ensure that teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The Assistant Principal for Personal Development will monitor the delivery of RSE through quality assuring the provisions and resources. RSE delivered by the Ethos Team is subject to its own quality assurance and monitoring which is then fed back to the Senior Leadership Team. This policy will be reviewed annually by the principal. At every review, the policy will be shared with the full governing board.

11. Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- SEND policy
- Equality policy
- Teaching and learning policy
- Curriculum policy
- Child protection and Safeguarding policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

This policy was been approved by the board on:

September 2024

Signature of LGB chair:



Name of chair of the Board:

Mr Tim Foster

Date for renewal:

September 2025

**Appendix 1: KS3 and KS4 Personal Development Curriculum 2024-25
(Including RSE and Health Education)**

Term	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
Theme	Health and Wellbeing	The online World	RSE	Rights and Responsibility	Future Focus	Staying Safe
Year 7 Key Topics	Resilience and coping	Data and information	Puberty, bodily autonomy	Diversity	Employable skills	Images, grooming, substances
Year 8 Key Topics	Resilience and toxic stress	Images	Relationship law, exploitation	Democracy and law	Apprenticeships, CVs and cover letters	Violence against women
Year 9 Key Topics	Gambling and mental health	Online gambling and images	Coercion, STIs	Law	Working Options	FGM, 'honour-based'

Year 10:

Professional conduct

Rights & responsibilities

Independent living costs

Financial planning and budgeting

CVs & applications

Colleges, Apprenticeships & Universities.

Year 11:

Work experience and the job market

Learning to drive, running and buying a car

Rent and mortgages

Saving, borrowing, loans and credit.

Appendix 2: KS5 Personal Development Curriculum (Including RSE and Health Education)

	Term 1 (8 Weeks)	Term 2 (7 Weeks)	Term 3 (6 Weeks)	Term 4 (5 Weeks)	Term 5 (7 Weeks)	Term 6 (6 Weeks)
Year 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sixth Form induction -Unifrog Personality Profile -Unifrog Interest Profile -Motivation -Time Management -Action Planning -Growth Mindset -Careers planning -Building healthy relationships, -Love and romantic relationships -HIV transmission and attitudes -Pregnancy and Abortion -Pornography and Relationships -New relationships -Healthy conflict and assertive communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Post-18 choices and intentions - Mental Wellbeing -Study Skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Exploring Pathways - Revision skills, Note-taking -Creating a revision timetable -Mock exam prep -Unifrog updates -Apprenticeship meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sexual Health and STIs -Writing a CV -Writing a Cover letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Jobs - Cars - Flats -Preparing for Futures Week -UCAS References. 	Mock Exams
Year 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UCAS Application timeline University shortlisting Personal Statement writing and checking Apprenticeship route searches CV updates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Mental Wellbeing -Revision skills -Time management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Revision Skills, Mindmapping -Revision timetables -Mock exam prep -Getting a job, Assessment Centres 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexual Health and STIs Exam revision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wellbeing, Anxiety, and Stress 	

Appendix 3: By the end of secondary school pupils should know (comparison of current and draft guidance, where draft is in bold):

Category	Component
Families	that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
	how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
	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.
	why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
	the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
	the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
	how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
Respectful relationship	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.
	that fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed.
	practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.

	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).
	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.
	about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
	that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
	what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
	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.
Online and Media	their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
	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.
	not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.
	what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
	about circulating images and information and how to safely report to trusted adults the non-consensual creation or distribution of an intimate image. Pupils should understand that making, keeping or sending naked or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented, and even if the image was created by the child and/or using AI generated imagery. Pupils should understand the potentially serious consequences of asking for naked, semi-naked or sexual images, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment.
	the impact of viewing harmful content, including pornography, that presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others, and can negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately.
	how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
	the characteristics of social media, including that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online.
	that websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (i.e. to enable targeted advertising).
	that criminals can operate online scams, for example using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society.
	the concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment, revenge porn, upskirting and taking/sharing intimate sexual photographs without consent, public sexual harassment, and unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching.
	The concepts and laws relating to sexual exploitation and abuse, grooming, stalking, and forced marriage.

	The concept and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault.
	the concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour
	how to seek support for worrying or abusive behaviour in themselves or others, including information on where to report abuse.
	the physical and emotional damage which can be caused by female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty, where to find support, and the law around these areas. This should include that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, or fail to protect a person under 16 for whom someone is responsible from FGM, or to take girls who are UK nationals abroad for FGM, regardless of whether it is lawful in that country.
	. how to recognise, respect and communicate boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) such as kissing or touching.
	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).
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	the law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex.
	about sexual consent and their capacity to give or withhold consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, e.g. the law, faith and family values.
	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.
	That some sexual behaviours can be harmful and that there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding sexual pressure, including from peers, and how to avoid putting sexual pressure on others.
	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.
	the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
	that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
	that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
	the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
	the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
	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).
	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.
Law	marriage
	consent, including the age of consent
	violence against women and girls including domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty;
	sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour;
	the Online Safety Act;
	online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
	pornography
	abortion
	protected characteristics (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation);
	substance misuse
	gambling
	violence and exploitation by gangs
	carrying knives;
	extremism/radicalisation
	criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
Mental Wellbeing	hate crime
	how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
	that happiness is linked to being connected to others. Pupils should be supported to understand what makes them feel lonely, while recognising that loneliness is for most people an inevitable part of life and is not something to be ashamed of.
	how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
	common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression), including factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious mental health conditions. Pupils should understand that worrying and feeling down are normal and affect everyone at different times and are not in themselves a sign of a mental health condition.
	how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
	the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
	that gambling can lead to serious mental health harms, including anxiety, depression, and suicide, and that some gambling products are more likely to cause these harms than others.
Internet and Safety Harms	about the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing.
	the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.

	the risks related to online gambling and gambling content within gaming, including addiction and the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online
	how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.
	About the prevalence of deepfakes, including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them.
	the risks of illegal behaviours online, including drug and knife supply or the sale of drugs online.
	the serious risks of viewing online content that promotes self-harm and suicide, including how to safely report this material and how to access support after viewing it.
Physical Health and Fitness	the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.
	factual information about the prevalence and characteristics of more serious health conditions.
	that physical activity can promote wellbeing and combat stress.
	about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.
Healthy Eating	how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
	the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
	the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.
	the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
	awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
	the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
	the facts about the risks of nicotine and non-nicotine vaping, including potential harm to the developing adolescent brain.
Health and prevention	about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
	about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
	how and when to self-care for minor ailments, and the role of pharmacists as knowledgeable healthcare professionals.
	the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
	the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
	the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
	How to navigate their local healthcare system: what a GP is, when to use A&E / minor injuries, accessing sexual health and family planning clinics, the role of local pharmacies.
	the importance of healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy, including pelvic floor health, information on miscarriage and pregnancy loss, and how to access care and

	support.
Personal Safety	how to identify risk and manage personal safety in increasingly independent situations, including around roads, railways and water (including the water safety code), and in unfamiliar social or work settings (for example the first time a young person goes on holiday without their parents).
	how to recognise and manage peer influence in relation to risktaking behaviour and personal safety.
	facts and the law around carrying knives and knife crime.
Basic First Aid	basic treatment for common injuries.
	life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
	the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.
Developing Bodies	key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
	the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.
	about menstrual and gynaecological health, including what is an average period, period problems such as premenstrual syndrome, heavy menstrual bleeding, endometriosis, and polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS), and when to seek help from healthcare professionals.
	the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and menopause, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women

Appendix 4: Parent form: Withdrawal from sex education within RSE

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			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL

Agreed actions from discussion with parents	<p><i>Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.</i></p> <p><i>Eg: [Student name] will be taking part in all lessons containing relationships content, and during the sex education lessons, he/she will be working independently on a project in the Pastoral Hub.</i></p>