



## **Relationships and Sex Education Policy**

<b>Policy Written/Reviewed by</b>	Katie Martin
<b>Date of Review</b>	December 2025
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<b>Approval by Trust Board</b>	

***Sex and relationship education (SRE) is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships for family life built on respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality, and sexual health. It is not about the promotion of sexual orientation or sexual activity.***

**DfES 0116/2000**

### **Aims**

The aims of this relationships and sex education (RSE) policy at The Rowans Academy are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Give pupils 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
- Ensure the Rowans' core values of Kindness, Commitment and Resilience are central to the work of relationships and sex education.
- Raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence, trying to develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media.
- Teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, physical and emotional abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them;
- Encourage pupils to seek information or support, should they need it, both during their time at The Rowans and after.

### **Statutory requirements**

As a secondary academy 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 [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

At The Rowans we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

### **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 not about the promotion of sexual activity.

### **Curriculum**

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

As a school, we work in conjunction with the PSHE association and "A better Medway" to focus on issues which are current and specific within the surrounding areas to ensure our curriculum is relevant and tailored to our cohort of students.

### **Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum.

Pupils also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional.

We may invite guest speakers to talk on issues related to sex and relationships. It is our experience that certain subjects are better received when delivered by an expert or experienced health

professionals (such as the School Nurse Team) who can challenge pupil's knowledge and perceptions. A teacher will be present throughout these sessions. Visiting speakers will be given a copy of this policy and expected to comply with the guidelines outlined within it.

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

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

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, LGBTQ+ 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 headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE

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/non-science components of RSE

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.

Mrs Bourner are responsible for the planning and teaching of PSHE and SRE across the school

### **Safeguarding and confidentiality**

We provide a safe and supportive community where pupils feel comfortable seeking help and guidance on anything that may be concerning them about life either at school or at home. Training around confidentiality is provided to all staff.

It may be the case that discussion around what is acceptable and not acceptable in relationships may lead to the disclosure of a child protection issue. If this is the case, the child protection and safeguarding procedure will be followed.

If a staff member is approached by a pupil under 16 who is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, the teacher should:

- Ensure that the pupil is accessing all the contraceptive and sexual health advice available and understands the risks of being sexually active;
- Encourage the pupil to talk to their parent or carer. Pupils may feel that they are more comfortable bringing these issues to a teacher they trust, but it is important that children and their parents have open and trusting relationships when it comes to sexual health and the Rowans will encourage this as much as possible.

- Decide whether there is a child protection issue. This may be the case if the teacher is concerned that there is coercion or abuse involved. If a member of staff is informed that a pupil under 13 is having, or is contemplating having sexual intercourse, this will be dealt with under child protection procedures.
- Pupils with special educational needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation and less able to protect themselves from harmful influences. If staff are concerned that this is the case, they should seek support from the Safeguarding Lead to decide what is in the best interest of the child.

### **Pupils**

Pupils are expected to;

- engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.
- be considerate of other people's feelings and beliefs. Pupils who regularly fail to follow these standards of behaviour will be dealt with under the behaviour policy.
- be encouraged and hopefully feel comfortable to talk to a member of staff, regarding any concerns they have relating to sex education. Staff must consult the safeguarding Leads if there is a child protection concern or they feel ill-equipped to deal with the issue at hand.

### **Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents are required to;

- Share the responsibility of sex education and support their children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Be encouraged to create an open home environment where pupils can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that have been raised through PSHE activities.
- Be vigilant and responsive to concerns relating to inappropriate material available or viewed on-line.
- Be encouraged to seek additional support in this from the School where they feel it is needed.

*Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science 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.*

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

### **Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. Sonia Bournier regularly attends networking meetings arranged through the PSHE Association to remain up to date with current policies regarding the delivery of RSE.

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.

### **Monitoring arrangements**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Sonia Bournier and the Headteacher with line management responsibility for PSHE, through the schools plans for the monitoring of teaching and learning. This policy will be reviewed by a member of the leadership team annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher and the Board of Trustees.

Staff, pupils and families can refer to the Brook guide to sexual health and well-being. This guide gives an overview of safe and healthy sexual development.

<https://legacy.brook.org.uk/our-work/the-sexual-behaviours-traffic-light-tool>

What is green behaviour?	What is amber behaviour?	What is red behaviour?
<p>Green behaviours reflect safe and healthy sexual development. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>displayed between children or young people of similar age or developmental ability</li> <li>reflective of natural curiosity, experimentation, consensual activities and positive choices</li> </ul>	<p>Amber behaviours have the potential to be outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>unusual for that particular child or young person</li> <li>of potential concern due to age, or developmental differences</li> <li>of potential concern due to activity type, frequency, duration or context in which they occur</li> </ul>	<p>Red behaviours are outside of safe and healthy behaviour. They may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>excessive, secretive, compulsive, coercive, degrading or threatening</li> <li>involving significant age, developmental, or power differences</li> <li>of concern due to the activity type, frequency, duration or the context in which they occur</li> </ul>
<div style="border: 1px solid green; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">What can you do?</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">What can you do?</div>	<div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;">What can you do?</div>

The following grids explain in more detail the learning which will take place during secondary school education.

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<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: 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</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<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>
Online and media	<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> <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>
Being safe	<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>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<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</li> <li>• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising 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> <li>• 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</li> <li>• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</li> <li>• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</li> <li>• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>