



Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy

Date of last review by Local Governing Body	January 2026
Review cycle	Annual
Policy due for review by Local Governing Body	September 2026 (due to changes in DfE Guidance)

Contents

	Page no
1. Introduction	3
2. What is Relationships and Sex Education?	3
3. Aims	3
4. Statutory Requirements	4
5. Delivery of RSE	4
6. Curriculum	6
7. Monitoring	6
8. Policy Development	7
9. Roles and Responsibilities	7
10. Information for Parents/Carers	8
11. Right to Withdraw from Sex Education	8
Appendix 1: Curriculum Map and Curriculum Overview	10
Appendix 2: Right to Withdraw Form	12

1. Introduction

At Estuary Academy North, the Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum is centered around ensuring our pupils receive consistent, relevant and beneficial education relating to relationships, sex, health and wellbeing. Our aim is to ensure that our pupils are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge to navigate the world around them, and are aware of the support, assistance and advice that they can access, should they need to.

Health Education is an integral part of our school curriculum, with healthy lifestyles and health choices being delivered via our Physical Education and Food and Nutrition lessons, as well as our PSHE/RSHE curriculum.

Our RSHE curriculum is adaptive to current needs, including contextual safeguarding; taking into account not only that which students need to know in the long-term but also that which is vital for their development and safety in the present. Through our RSHE curriculum we strive to give all of our learners the opportunity to think critically, build a broad knowledge of personal, societal and global issues, examine the world that surrounds them, develop curiosity and build the confidence to articulate and respect differing views, opinions, values and beliefs.

2. What is Relationships, Sex and Health Education?

RSHE is a vital element of PSHE. At Estuary Academy North, we believe that all pupils are entitled to good quality Relationships, Sex and Health Education that empowers them to treat themselves and others with dignity and respect. Effective RSHE can “help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development” (DfE 2025).

We define ‘relationships education’ as the fundamental building blocks of developing positive relationships, including friendships, family relationships and romantic relationships, whilst developing the skills to recognise and navigate unhealthy relationships.

We define ‘sex education’ as the development of knowledge of the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, puberty, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health.

RSHE goes beyond the learning of biological information and focuses deeply on attitudes, values and beliefs, with the intention of building confidence and skills in managing all forms of relationships. In line with statutory guidance from the DfE, we believe that effective RSHE can support the prevention of harm and safeguard our young people, by helping them to recognise, question and protect themselves from things that are not right.

3. Aims

The aims of Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) at Estuary Academy North are:

- To provide a safe and respectful environment in which to develop curiosity and engage in discussion and questioning around RHSE
- To provide opportunities to build self-esteem, confidence, empathy and respect for self and others
- To prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development, the importance of health and hygiene, and safety in intimate relationships
- To provide access, or signposting, to accurate and appropriate advice and support
- To create a positive and supportive culture around sexuality and relationships
- To teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To provide students with the knowledge to recognise unsafe situations and be able to protect themselves and others

4. Statutory requirements

As a secondary Academy we must provide RSHE to all pupils as per Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. In teaching RSHE, 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.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, Chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

5. Delivery of RSHE

The RSHE Curriculum at Estuary Academy North is taught via dedicated PSHE lessons, of which students have 3, 45 minute sessions per week. RSHE content is interwoven into the lessons via a competency-based curriculum which allows students to access RSHE education alongside PSHE topics. This competency-based approach ensures that all of our students, whether long-term or respite, receive a broad and balanced RSHE and PSHE education during the time that they are with us.

In order for RSHE to be effective, young people need RSHE to be delivered in a trusting, honest, comfortable environment, free of judgement or prejudice. For this reason, we center our RSHE teaching on the importance of respect for self and others, with clear expectations that individual experiences, values and beliefs are to be respected.

At Estuary Academy North, we work closely with external partners such as We Are With You, Brook, HERA and Kent Community Health to ensure that our pupils have access to the most effective professional care. We also work collaboratively with external workshop providers and speakers to ensure that RSHE is engaging, relevant and effective for our pupils.

RSHE staff at Estuary Academy North work closely with our Safeguarding team to ensure that students are signposted to appropriate professional support or services when required.

Through our RSHE curriculum and work with external partners we intend to:

- Reduce the negative outcomes of sexual activity, including unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections
- Delay the age at which young people first have sexual intercourse
- Lead in the clarification of attitudes and values towards sex and sexuality
- Improve the quality of pupils' relationships with their partners, families and friends

RSHE 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, 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: children in care or young carers).

We ensure RSHE is inclusive and meets the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities by:

- Utilising quality first teaching in all RSE lessons
- Ensuring that the curriculum is adapted to suit the needs of our pupils
- Following up with 1:1 conversations or interventions with our SEMH team for students who may be vulnerable
- Raising concerns via our Child Protection, Safeguarding and SEN policies where appropriate
- Embedding RSHE across all subject areas, where appropriate, to ensure a cohesive and consistent approach to the study of RSHE

6. Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. The RSHE curriculum is covered as part of the overall PSHE/RSHE curriculum through a range of PSHE and careers lessons. Topics that fall under the sex education category are identified in blue text.

At Estuary Academy North, our PSHE/RSHE curriculum has been created in line with statutory DfE guidance and the guidance of the PSHE association; ensuring that all pupils receive an in-depth curriculum that is age appropriate, contextually adapted and prepares them for their developmental years and beyond.

As our curriculum evolves, we will continue to work in consultation with parents, carers, pupils and staff, to ensure the curriculum meets the needs of our learners and their context. If pupils ask questions that fall outside of the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner and refer students to the appropriate members of school staff (careers advisor, safeguarding team, pastoral staff) so that pupils are fully and appropriately informed.

Our curriculum offer reflects that our students come to us for both periods of respite and for longer placements in Key Stage 4. Our curriculum is competencies based, ensuring that all students receive a broad range of study in the three key areas: relationships and sex education, living in the wider world, and health, regardless of the period of time that they are with us.

We recognise that pupils will come to Estuary Academy North having experienced different amounts of RSHE teaching in their mainstream schools, prior to joining us. Our curriculum offer and approach to teaching PSHE/RSHE is flexible to ensure that all pupils have an equal opportunity to access the vital learning that PSHE/RSHE provides.

7. Monitoring

Delivery of RSHE at Estuary Academy North is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team through book looks, learning walks, and student/parent/carer/staff voice.

Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment process.

This policy will be reviewed by Jade Jarvis, Deputy Head Teacher and lead for RSHE/PSHE, annually.

At every review, the policy will be approved by Odette Kelham on behalf of the governing body.

8. Policy development

The future development of this policy and the teaching of RSHE, will be subject to our school monitoring procedures, consisting of book looks, learning walks and student/parent/carer/staff voice.

This policy will continue to be developed in line with national statutory guidance, as well as the contextual and current needs of the student body here at Estuary Academy North.

Effective RSHE takes into consideration the views and experiences of pupils. For this reason, feedback from students will form an integral part of the review process for the RSHE policy and curriculum.

In reviewing and developing this policy, we aim to:

- Review local and national guidance in relation to current RSHE needs and recommendations
- Consult with staff and gather recommendations
- Consult with parents/carers and stakeholders and gather their views on this policy
- Consult with our student body to examine what students want from their RSHE curriculum, what works well and what can be improved

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board will hold the Head Teacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The Governing Board has delegated the approval of this policy to Odette Kelham.

9.2 The Head Teacher

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

9.3 The Deputy Head Teacher

The Deputy Head Teacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught in line with this policy, and is responsible for reviewing and amending this policy, in line with statutory guidance.

9.4 Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff at Estuary Academy North to:

- Ensure that this policy is adhered to
- Act as a responsible role model for young people at all times
- Maintain a non-judgmental stance in relation to beliefs and values
- Provide RSHE that is delivered in an inclusive manner and considers the needs of all young people, including those who are marginalised and vulnerable
- Actively challenge racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny and other forms of discrimination
- Model positive attitudes to RSHE
- Respond to the needs of individual pupils
- Provide reliable, appropriate and professional guidance to support services or the Safeguarding team when applicable, or when a pupil asks questions that go beyond the scope of the RSHE policy
- Follow Estuary Academy North's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures at all times

9.5 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSHE and, when discussing issues related to RSHE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. This is set out at the start of every lesson and reminders are given as needed.

10. Information for Parents/Carers

Our PSHE/RSHE curriculum map and curriculum overview can be found in Appendix 1.

Parents/carers can request to view teaching materials for the RSHE curriculum. Requests should be made in writing to the Deputy Head Teacher.

Where external speakers or providers are used in the delivery of the RSHE curriculum, parents/carers will be informed in advance. Parents/carers can request to see teaching materials for these external providers. Requests should be made in writing to the Deputy Head Teacher.

Child Protection, Safeguarding and Safer Recruitment procedures are followed for all external visitors.

11. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSHE. Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw children from relationships and health education, nor can they be withdrawn from topics

taught as part of the science curriculum, including science topics related to puberty or sexual reproduction.

Parents/carers can request their child be withdrawn from sex education up to, and until, 3 terms before the child turns 16.

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.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Head Teacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Head Teacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and agree an individualised plan for students in each case.

PSHE/RSHE CURRICULUM MAP



Developing confidence, self-worth, adaptability and decision making :

Developing empathy and compassion and clarifying values

Developing confidence, agency and support-seeking skills

Developing communication, risk management and support-seeking skills

Developing employability and money management skills



YEAR 11

TERM 5

TERM 4

TERM 3

TERM 2

TERM 1

TERM 6

TERM 5

TERM 4

TERM 3

TERM 2

TERM 1

Developing empathy and compassion, strategies to manage influence, assertive influence and support



Developing goal setting, leadership skills and personal autonomy



Developing motivation, organisation and leadership



YEAR 10

TERM 1

TERM 2

TERM 3

TERM 4

TERM 5

TERM 6



Developing self-awareness, goal-setting, adaptability and organisation skills

Developing agency and decision making, strategies to manage influence and access support



Developing respect for diversity, risk management and support seeking skills



Developing autonomy and strategies to manage influence and access support



Developing safety skills in self, relationships and the community



Developing goal setting, motivation and self-awareness



Developing agency and strategies to manage influence and access support



Developing safety skills, relationships skills, and values



Developing personal identity, boundaries and positive habits

KS3

TERM 5

TERM 4

TERM 3

TERM 2

TERM 1



Developing safety skills in self, relationships and the community



Developing goal setting, motivation and self-awareness



Developing agency and strategies to manage influence and access support



Developing safety skills, relationships skills, and values



Developing personal identity, boundaries and positive habits

PSHE/RSHE CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

KS3

YEAR 10

YEAR 11

AUTUMN 1	<p>Developing personal identity, boundaries and positive habits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal identity and values Making and maintaining friendships Assertive communication Relationship boundaries Saving and borrowing Importance of physical activity Diet and exercise Identifying and challenging bullying
AUTUMN 2	<p>Developing safety skills, relationships skills, and values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning skills and teamwork Managing online presence Healthy/unhealthy relationships FGM and forced marriage Friendship challenges Managing conflict Safety and first aid Resisting peer influence Online safety - apps and data
SPRING 1	<p>Developing agency and strategies to manage influence and access support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Respect in school Body satisfaction and self concept Communicating online Gangs and violent crime Rights in the community Gambling, financial choices and debt "Sexting" Sleep Roles in relationships
SPRING 2	<p>Developing goal setting, motivation and self-awareness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employability Aspirations for the future Puberty and managing change Digital and media literacy Financial decisions Cancer awareness Regulating emotions Change, loss and bereavement Stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination
SUMMER 1	<p>Developing safety skills in self, relationships and the community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identity and the world of work Boundaries and consent Unwanted contact Drugs, alcohol and tobacco LGBT+ inclusivity Maintaining positive mental health Hygiene and dental health Sharing media online + laws
SUMMER 2	<p>Developing autonomy and strategies to manage influence and access support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources of careers advice Career choices Relationships and sex in the media Introduction to contraception + STIs Mental health (including selfharm and eating disorders) Healthy coping strategies Online choices and influences Promoting diversity and equality

AUTUMN 1	<p>Developing self-awareness, goal-setting, adaptability and organisation skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transition to KS4 Employability skills Changing interests and qualities Future choices Post-16 Preparedness Managing Mental Health
AUTUMN 2	<p>Developing empathy and compassion, strategies to manage influence, assertive influence and support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managing Relationships The different stages of relationships Relationship endings Body Image and the Media Pornography Deepfakes and AI Sexuality and safety The law in relation to sexual crimes Local culture
SPRING 1	<p>Developing agency and decision making, strategies to manage influence and access support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personal Safety First Aid and CPR Unhealthy coping mechanisms Crime Online Relationships and safety Peer influence Contextual and Community Safety CSE, CCE, grooming, financial exploitation, exploitation
SPRING 2	<p>Developing goal setting, leadership skills and personal autonomy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employability Online career opportunities Online presence Physical Health - sleep, diet and exercise Sexual Health - STIs and contraception Health services and medical consent
SUMMER 1	<p>Developing respect for diversity, risk management and support seeking skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Committed Relationships Positive and unhealthy relationships Honour based violence and forced marriage Diversity and Discrimination Extremism Racism, immigration and right wing extremism
SUMMER 2	<p>Developing motivation, organisation, leadership and presentation skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online Safety Sharing and creating online content safely Social media and misinformation Data usage and influence Crime in the online world Coping with Exam Season

AUTUMN 1	<p>Developing employability and money management skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gambling and gamblers fallacy Budgeting and financial decisions Financial exploitation Career progression opportunities Work experience Applying for Post-16 The Equality Act, prejudice and discrimination Political structure in the UK, the right to vote
AUTUMN 2	<p>Developing communication, risk management and support-seeking skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Positive and negative relationships Culture and faith in relationships Domestic abuse and the law Sexual Health - STIs, contraception and influence Drugs, alcohol and harmful sexual behaviours Intimate Relationships and pleasure Coercion and control
SPRING 1	<p>Developing confidence, agency and support-seeking skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lifestyle choices Cancer awareness Blood, organ and stem cell donation Cosmetic and aesthetic procedures Strategies for wellbeing Common mental health concerns Substance use and its impacts The law in relation to possession and supply
SPRING 2	<p>Developing empathy and compassion, clarifying values and support-seeking skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families and parenting Fostering and adoption The myth of "common law marriage" Fertility and pregnancy Abortion and miscarriage Managing Change, Grief and Loss
SUMMER 1	<p>Developing confidence, self-worth, adaptability and decision making skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluating strengths and areas for development Managing change and wellbeing Coping with exam season Wellbeing and stress Confidence and self-esteem Personal safety in new settings Rights, responsibilities, confidentiality and harassment in the workplace

Appendix 2



**ESTUARY
ACADEMY
NORTH**
INSPIRE, ASPIRE, EMPOWER

Estuary Academy North
Richmond Drive, Gravesend
Kent, DA12 4DJ

Telephone: 01474 332 897
Email: officenorth@estuaryacademy.co.uk
Web: www.estuaryacademy.co.uk

Request to Withdraw a Pupil from Sex Education

To be completed by parent/carer

Name of child _____

Date of birth _____

Name of parent _____

Date of Request _____

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

