

Relationships and Sex Education Policy


Southend High School for Girls Academy Trust



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A = accepted with no amendments

B = accepted with amendments

C = new edition created

Policy Summary

- SHSG believes that effective sex and relationship education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. It should not be delivered in isolation. It should be firmly rooted within the framework for PSHE and the National Curriculum. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others.
- SHSG believes that Relationship and Sex Education must be fully inclusive of all genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations and all types of families.
- Sex and relationship education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at SHSG and of society and preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.
- SHSG believes it is essential to work in partnership with parents, consulting them regularly on the content of sex and relationship education programmes.
- The school recognises the need for teachers to be trained to deliver high quality relationships and sex education.
- The school has set a framework for establishing what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole-class setting and how to deal with individual questions.
- Safeguarding procedures will be followed at all times.
- The school recognises the importance of working with external agencies and healthcare professionals.

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Definition

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is about the emotional, social, and cultural development of students and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values in a safe inclusive environment where young people can process, reflect, and explore RSE. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. It is a positive and proactive approach that aims to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including friendships, not just intimate relationships.

Aims

At Southend High School for Girls we believe that high-quality Relationships and Sex Education provides students with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, healthy and informed relationship choices as young people and in the future as adults. We believe in empowering our students to understand their bodies, to reflect on their relationship values and to be able to openly discuss relationships and sex. We believe that this approach will reduce the risk of unhealthy and abusive relationships. At Southend High School for Girls we are committed to the important role that RSE plays in students' holistic education and we aim to build on the RSE programmes covered in Primary Schools.

Statutory Guidance

The school acknowledges that all secondary academies must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. In teaching RSE we acknowledge that we are required by our funding agreement to have regard for the guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. This policy was developed in response to the following documents:

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-rse-and-pshe>

Keeping children safe in education: for schools and colleges

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2>

Behaviour and discipline in schools: guidance for headteachers and staff

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>

Equality Act 2010: advice for schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools>

Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>

Alternative provision

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision>

Mental health and behaviour in schools

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental health and behaviour in schools .pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf)

Preventing and tackling bullying

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/preventing-and-tackling-bullying>

Cyber bullying: advice for headteachers and school staff

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying Advice for Headteachers and School Staff 121114.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/374850/Cyberbullying_Advice_for_Headteachers_and_School_Staff_121114.pdf)

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sexual-violence-and-sexual-harassment-between-children-in-schools-and-colleges>

Promoting fundamental British values as part of SMSC in schools

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/promoting-fundamental-british-values-through-smsc>

National Citizen Service: guidance for schools and colleges

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-citizen-service-guidance-for-schools-and-colleges>

Southend High School for Girls acknowledges the importance of knowing what the law says about, sex, relationships, and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos, and other material using technology. This will help young people know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people, and which ensure young people take responsibility for their own

actions. Students will be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when the relevant topics are being taught and materials will be delivered in an age and stage appropriate way, for example, these will include:

- Marriage
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Violence against women and girls
- Sexual Violence and Harassment and Peer on peer Abuse
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexting, youth produced sexual imagery, nudes etc)
- Pornography
- Abortion
- Gender identity
- Substance misuse
- Violence and exploitation by gangs
- Extremism/radicalisation
- Criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- Hate crime
- Female genital mutilation (FGM)

Consultation Process

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

1. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to read the policy and make recommendations
2. Parent consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to comment on the policy
3. Pupil consultation – student focus groups were held to investigate what exactly pupils want from their RSE
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

Course Content

Our RSE curriculum is outlined in our PSHE policy. Detailed content of the Relationships & Sex curriculum will be made available to parents on request. Our curriculum content will cover the required themes as set out in 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers'.

By the end of Key Stage 4 the school will have covered:

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 and civil partnerships are, including their legal status e.g. that marriage and civil partnerships carry 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.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to the raising of children.
- how to: determine whether peers, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationships is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (both on and offline) including trust, respect, honesty, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.
- how stereotypes, 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 tolerance and respect to others and others' beliefs, including people in positions of authority.
- 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 online and offline.

- 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.
- the impact of viewing harmful content.
- that specifically sexually explicit material often 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.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is against the law.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared, and used online.

Being safe

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, and domestic abuse and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (on and offline).

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- 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 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.
- 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 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.

- how 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.

Delivery

Southend High School for Girls acknowledges that high-quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching can help pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils both at school and in society.

RSE will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting students to be safe, happy, and successful for life beyond school. The curriculum on relationships and sex education will complement and be supported by wider policies on behaviour, inclusion, respect for equality and diversity, anti-bullying and safeguarding. RSE will sit within the context of the broader ethos and approach to developing students socially, morally, spiritually, and culturally, and its pastoral care system.

Southend High School for Girls will deliver the content set out by the Department for Education in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum set within Life Skills. Effective teaching will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to students, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons.

The PSHE co-ordinator will work closely with staff in related curriculum areas to ensure Relationships, Sex and Health Education programmes complement each other and do not duplicate, content covered in national curriculum subjects such as Science, Information Technology and Physical Education.

Southend High School for Girls delivers Relationship and Sex Education and Health Education throughout KS3 and KS4 within:

- Life Skills lessons
- Tutor Groups and related pastoral programme
- Assemblies
- External speakers and agencies
- Health care professionals
- Other curriculum delivery including Science, ICT, Food Technology, English, and PE.

Parental right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After that point if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will arrange to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

Requests for withdrawal must be made in writing and submitted to the Head Teacher. The Head Teacher will discuss the request with parents and take the appropriate action. The Head Teacher will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal. There is no right to withdraw from the national curriculum.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. Specialist RSE training from a lead RSE expert is provided for teachers of PHSE/RSE. We also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Working with External Agencies

Southend High School for Girls is aware that working with external partners will enhance the delivery of RSE and will provide support by bringing in specialist knowledge and implement different ways of engaging with young people. Where Southend High School for Girls uses external agencies, the credentials of the visiting organisation and any visitors linked to the agency will be checked. Southend High School for Girls will work with external agencies to ensure that the content delivered is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils. Any materials that are used as part of the delivery must be approved by the school in advance of the session.

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

Southend High School for Girls recognises that at the heart of RSE, the focus is on keeping children safe, and acknowledges the significant role played in preventative education. We will allow children an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Children will be made aware of the processes to enable them to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This will also include processes when they have a concern about a peer or friend.

In line with the document Keeping Children Safe in Education 2021 (KCSIE), all staff are aware of what to do if a child tells them that they are

being abused or neglected. Staff are also aware of need to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those that need to be involved, such as the Designated Safeguarding Lead and children's social care. A member of staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this is not in the best interests of the child. The involvement of the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) will ensure that trusted, high quality local resources are engaged, links to the police and other agencies are utilised and the knowledge of any particular local issues it may be appropriate to address in lessons

RSE and Sexual Violence and Harassment between Students

We recognise that children are capable of abusing their peers. Abuse will never be tolerated or passed off as "banter", "just having a laugh" or "part of growing up". We also recognise the gendered nature of peer-on-peer abuse. However, all peer-on-peer abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously. Peer on peer abuse is covered as part of our RSE programme with lessons on behaviours and consent. Life skills staff complete an online training module on sexual harassment and violence between children. Tailored workshops are delivered from January to all year groups.

Linked policies

- Safeguarding/Child protection
- Anti-Bullying
- Sexual Violence and Harassment Policy and Guidance
- Health and Safety
- Online Safety
- SEND