

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Policy

Provide Community

Published by: Sophie Milner

Reviewed by: Quality Review Group

Valid from: January 2026

Valid till: January 2029

To be reviewed every 3 years, or when new RSHE guidance is published

Table of Contents

Provide Community	3
Introduction	3
What is Relationships and Sex Education?.....	4
RSHE Programme	4
Responsibility of the Educational Setting	9
Our Approach	10
Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)	12
Equality	12
Safeguarding and Confidentiality	13
Parents and Carers	13
Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment	14
Links to further Policies, Resources and Reading	15
Appendix	16

Provide Community

Essex Sexual Health Service (ESHS) is delivered by Provide Community and is commissioned by Essex County Council.

Provide Community is a Community Company (CIC) made up of multiple business brands delivering a broad range of health and social care services, as well as designing, developing and building digital innovation solutions for the healthcare market. As a CIC Provide Community are dedicated to reinvesting profits back into the communities that it serves. As an employee-owned enterprise, its workforce of over 1,200 colleagues, is represented by a Council of Governors and are responsible for making key business decisions.

Our vision of 'Transforming Lives' drives our commitment to personalised care and innovative technology, guiding us to make a meaningful impact in the communities we serve.

Our Mission: An ambitious, employee-owned social enterprise, growing in size and influence. We transform lives by treating, caring and educating people

Our Values: Care, Innovation and Compassion are at the heart of everything we do.

Introduction

This Policy covers Provide Community's approach to delivering Relationships and Sex and Health Education (RSHE) via the RSHE Education Team. Although delivery will predominantly focus on Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), elements of Health Education (HE) will also be incorporated within the sessions, therefore, RSHE will be the terminology used throughout this document.

High quality, evidence-based and age-appropriate teaching of these subjects can help prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. They can also enable schools to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils, at school and in society¹. Studies have shown that effective RSHE has a variety of benefits to young people including: reducing harm and sexual violence; being more likely to seek help or speak out; being more likely to practise safe sex and have improved health outcomes; more likely that the first sex is consensual; improve digital literacies; improve gender equitable attitudes and improve mental health². There is no evidence that RSHE hastens the first experience of sex, these findings are confirmed by three separate evidence reviews³.

The aim of RSHE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships is. This will 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.⁴

What is Relationships and Sex Education?

“Relationships education is learning about the physical, social, legal and emotional aspects of human relationships including friendships, intimate, sexual and committed relationships and family life. Relationships education supports children to be safe, happy and healthy in their interactions with others now and in the future.” (SEF, 2020)

“Relationships, Sex and Health Education should give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like”. (DfE 2019)

Throughout this policy we also refer to the terminology ‘Sexual Health’. The World Health Organisation defines sexual health as ‘a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled’ (WHO, 2006)

Provide Community believes that every young person should have access to high quality, inclusive and age-appropriate relationships, sex and health education, with the aim of equipping young people with the knowledge and skills required to make informed decisions.

RSHE Programme

The RSHE programme is delivered by Health Promotion Practitioners from the local sexual health service in which it is located. This approach ensures that all practitioners delivering on the programme have up to date knowledge on local sexual health trends, access to services, and direct pathways into sexual health services, if required. All practitioners within the RSHE team hold a minimum of level 4 qualification in RSHE, providing them with the knowledge to discuss these sensitive subjects without embarrassment, and the skills to respond to questions appropriately and with confidence. All staff will also have the relevant disclosure and barring services (DBS) clearance, and this can be supplied to the educational establishment on request.

The RSHE team offer multiple programmes of education and training support and delivery. The programmes are non-exhaustive, and content is shaped and tailored depending on current data trends and changes in guidance and legislation. The RSHE Educational Programmes are outlined below.

RSHE to Young People

The RSHE team have programmes designed to be delivered to KS3, KS4 and further education (FE). DfE recognises “working with external organisations can enhance delivery of these subjects, bringing in specialist knowledge and different ways of engaging with young people”⁵. Content delivered within this programme is age appropriate and in line with DfE and government recommendations which can be found in Appendix A. The service supports a spiral approach for RSHE gradually building on previous learning, for example, if a discussion was taking place around consent with a year 8 group, this would be discussed in the context of consent that may take place in their daily lives, such as

taking a photo of their friend, holding someone's hand, touching someone's hair. If consent was being discussed to a year 10 group, this would also include examples of sexual consent in intimate relationships.

The RSHE team are also able to provide this programme to alternative educational settings, home educated groups and other services working with young people.

Examples of the programmes and age discussions can be found below; this is not exhaustive and subject to change. The service may provide some flexibility in this, if it is deemed appropriate to keep young people safe. For example, if it is apparent there has been a number of incidents involving students sharing intimate images between year 8 pupils, it may be agreed with the educational setting that it would be in the best interest of the pupils to deliver this content earlier to reduce harm and reoccurrence of incidents. Information below is a guideline, and individual lesson plans outlining content will be shared with the educational setting in advance. These lessons plan can then be shared by the educational establishment to parents and carers.

Examples of the training packages for schools and colleges are:

- Healthy Relationships
- Consent
- Contraception
- Exploring the difference between pornography and real – life intimate relationships
- Exploring the effects of sexist language and stereotyping
- Relationships and safety in an online world
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Conception, Pregnancy and Parenthood
- Introduction to Essex Sexual Health Services
- Sexual Pleasure

Subject Area	Year Group	Content Overview
Healthy Relationships	7,8,9	Characteristics of positive relationships, that they can expect to be treated with respect by others and in turn treat others with respect and kindness, recognising signs of unhealthy relationships, understanding the law, and where to go for help. To know the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. To know that there are different types of committed, stable relationships and to know how these relationships might contribute to human happiness. To be able to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when young people are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust. To know the importance of self-esteem.
Healthy Relationships	10,11, FE	Looking at what makes a healthy relationship, identifying red flags in relationships, including unwanted and sexual behaviours, violent behaviour and emotional abuse, the law, and where to go for help.

		To be able to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when young people are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust. To know how to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others. Know the skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration.
Consent	7,8	Understanding of consent within young people's daily lives, for example consent to give someone a cuddle, consent to take a photo of someone. To know that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok. To explore body language and verbal and non – verbal cues in relation to consent.
Consent	9, 10,11, FE	To know 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. To explore body language and verbal and non – verbal cues in relation to consent, and to have a good understanding of how people can give and receive consent, and that this can be withheld or removed at any time. Sessions may also explore sexual violence and rape, and what services are available for advice and support/
Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)	10,11, FE	Information about the dangers of unprotected sexual intercourse, how to stay safe including barrier protection and other prevention methods and where to go for help and support. Information on the use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP), and how and where to access these. To know the importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma. To know that barrier methods are the only form of contraception which protection against both pregnancy and STI's including HIV.
Contraception	10,11, FE	The facts about a range of contraception methods, how they can be accessed, and information relating to pregnancy including options available for emergency contraception. To know that barrier methods are the only form of contraception which protection against both pregnancy and STIs including HIV.

		To be signposted towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making.
Conception, Pregnancy and Parenthood	10,11, FE	To understand the facts about how a pregnancy occurs. To know the different ways to become a parent, including assisted and unassisted conception, adoption, fostering and becoming a stepparent. To know there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Know the medical and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help.
Exploring the difference between pornography and real – life intimate relationships	10,11, FE	To know that pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and this can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. Know that pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful. Know that strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury.
Relationships and safety in an online world	7,8,9	Know that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. To know about online risks including being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. To know not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Know what to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online. Be able to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour. To know where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online.
Relationships and safety in an online world	10,11, FE	To know that the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal. To know the law concerning the sharing of images, including that keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime, even if the photo is of themselves or of someone who has consented.

		To know that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. To be aware of the risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion. To know that images of a child can be created using AI generated imagery. To know 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. To recognise that AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. Know what to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online. To know how to report intimate images that may have been leaked online (using Childline's Report Remove tool). To discuss how some sub-cultures including online influencers might influence our understanding of sexual ethics. To know where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online.
Exploring the effects of sexist language and stereotyping	10, 11, FE	Know the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, such as the Equality Act and that everyone is unique and equal. How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage. To recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice. To know what constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it. To know that sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting. To know the 5 Ds of Bystander Intervention. In line with Freedom from violence and abuse: a cross-government strategy to build a safer society for women and girls government guidance, the service will also aim to educate young people to

		recognise misogynistic attitudes and understand its direct link to violence against women and girls (VAWG).
Sexual Pleasure	10, 11, FE	To understand the human body and how it can experience pleasure. To know that sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive.

RSHE Delivery to Educators and other Professionals Supporting RSHE

RSHE is more effective when taught by willing and competent teachers, the approach from the facilitator and the ability to create a safe and comfortable learning environment are important for effective learning to take place.

The RSHE team can offer training packages designed for anyone working within education, alongside wider training for anyone that works with young people, or with the general public, aimed at upskilling these people with the knowledge and approaches to discuss these subjects with the people they are supporting.

Examples of the training packages are:

- STIs, Contraception and Local Services
- Delivering Relationships and Sexual Health Education
- eC-Card training
- LGBT+ Inclusivity and Sexual Health
- Sex, Consent and Confidentiality
- HIV Today
- Growing up in an Online World
- Introduction to Essex Sexual Health Service
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Supporting Individuals with Additional Needs and Disabilities
- PrEPared for PrEP
- Introduction to Chemsex

Sexual Health Promotion in Educational settings

The RSHE team are also able to provide informal health promotion stands, where resources and information can be made available to pupils, this also allows opportunity for pupils to request additional information in a more informal environment. In Secondary schools this could include distributing leaflets and other resources and opportunity to engage in educational learning games. In further education settings this could also include the distribution of condoms.

Responsibility of the Educational Setting

Educational establishments will be required to complete a service level agreement (SLA) ahead of the RSHE team service delivering any educational sessions. The SLA establishes the boundaries that the service works within and outlines the responsibilities of each provider. The SLA also allows opportunity for the RSHE Education team to have insight into any additional needs within the classroom, this includes sensory needs,

language barriers, SEND, relevant family or community demographics to support them to tailor the session accordingly.

The SLA also recognises that it is the educational establishment's responsibility to provide their Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy as well as the name and contact details for the Safeguarding lead within the establishment. The SLA highlights that the responsibility to manage and respond to behaviour that challenges within the classroom sits with the teacher or staff member in attendance at the educational establishment. The SLA also recognises that the educational establishment must be able to provide a projector or screen that can be connected to a laptop to ensure the sessions can be delivered effectively by the Outreach and Education Team.

The educational establishment has a responsibility to ensure it is meeting the statutory guidance for schools on their legal duties with which they must comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (HE), this has been effective from September 2020. It is clear within these guidelines that each school must have a written policy for RSE, they must consult with parents and carers in developing and reviewing their policy, and parents and carers should have access to this policy. Educational establishments, parents and carers are also entitled to access the Provide Community's Relationship, Sex and Health Education Policy on request. It is the responsibility of the educational establishment to inform parents of their RSHE timetable, and to incorporate information regarding external visitors. The RSHE team will share resources with the educational team ahead of delivery, this will include lesson plans and further reading and signposting for parents and carers who wish to access more information to continue these conversations at home. It is the educational establishment's responsibility to communicate with the parents regarding this.

The educational establishment is responsible for ensuring that appropriate spiral RSHE has taken place ahead of the RSHE team's delivery. Provision to young people from the RSHE team should be seen as supplementary to the educational establishment's lifelong RSHE journey and should be incorporated as part of a wider whole school approach to RSHE.

Our Approach

The RSHE team will take steps at the start of each session to create a safe learning environment, this will include discussing a group agreement, encouraging participation and relaying that although this is safe environment to explore feelings, values and attitudes, that sexism, racism, homophobia and bullying are never acceptable. The facilitator will inform the learners around confidentiality with the service and its limitations. The learners will be asked to anonymise any questions or examples they may like to bring to the session. Questions will be responded to appropriately, in a non-judgemental way. Where appropriate, the team may also leave a 'questions box' within the educational setting, allowing the opportunity for pupils to ask anonymous questions that can be responded too within later sessions.

Facilitators will be sensitive to the needs of the pupils and will provide trigger warnings ahead of content that is identified in advance which could potentially be challenging for some learners. Learners will be informed that if they are affected by any of the content, they are able to leave the session and seek support from the school nurse or alternative member of staff, this will always be followed up via a joint collaboration with the school and the RSHE team.

Staff will use a variety of resources, activities and teaching strategies to make the sessions interactive and engaging for pupils. Irrespective of their preferred learning styles the practitioner might also use distancing techniques to stimulate discussion, using stories and scenarios and reframing questions from 'what do you think' to 'what might they think', putting a space between the sensitive subject and the learner.

The team will provide factual information, and where appropriate will provide references to the law. Words that learners may not be familiar with will always be explained to ensure understanding, using accurate names to label body parts. Facilitators will avoid providing personal opinions and sharing personal experiences or information.

Scare tactics such as explicit photos of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) will not be used during sessions, as this approach has been shown to be ineffective, instead, we work from a positive aspirational foundation teaching that relationships and intimacy should be a consensual, enjoyable part of life and that everyone has a choice regarding if they want to have sex.

Our aims

- To create a safe place for learning, where learners feel comfortable to reflect on their own attitudes, values and beliefs, and those of their peers and others
- To ensure our RSHE workshops and curriculum are engaging and relevant
- To ensure schools and colleges share ESHS materials and resources to parents and carers to provide transparency and engagement
- To provide accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex and sexual health
- To ensure our resources and materials are responsive to the communities we serve and where appropriate, work with other local organisations to understand local issues and ensure needs are met
- For learners to have an understanding of their rights when it comes to relationships and sexual health, enabling them to make informed decisions
- For learners to understand what measures they can take to keep themselves safe, including online
- For learners to value and respect themselves and others
- To understand the characteristics of positive and healthy relationships, and recognise signs of unhealthy or abusive relationships
- To provide opportunities for young people to challenge misogynistic attitudes and harmful ideas and to recognise how these views can contribute towards violence against women and girls (VAWG), without stigmatising boys and young men
- To support young people to develop positive conceptions of masculinity and femininity and have opportunities to challenge societal attitudes and outdated gender norms.
- To focus on building positive skills and attitudes and promote healthy norms about relationships including sexual relationships
- To know what services are available to them, and to know how to access them if required
- To understand the law, their rights and their responsibilities
- To know reliable locations where they can access more information and support
- For learners to know how to report harmful behaviour

- To provide a positive experience for first interaction with the local sexual health service, increasing confidence to access the service in future should they require
- To upskill educational staff to increase their confidence to deliver RSHE
- To ensure educational staff are skilled and confident in creating safe, inclusive environments which aim to support young people
- To ensure all educational staff are trained in safeguarding and know the policies and procedures for disclosures

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

The RSHE team will identify the needs of those with SEND through the initial SLA. Where possible, sessions will be differentiated to suit the needs of the learners, although this can be more challenging to incorporate in mainstream setting where there may be a disproportionate number of SEND learners within the classroom. In this situation, it is recommended that the educational establishment provide additional recap sessions with the SEND learners to ensure an accurate understanding of the session

The service offers a specialist programme for SEND learners with low to moderate support needs, consisting of clear and concise language and images, and differentiated content such as social stories and resources tailored to support sensory needs. The programme offers up to seven visits covering topics: Healthy Relationships, Consent, Contraception, Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), Harmful Language, Staying Safe Online and Pornography. STIs and contraception sessions are not able to be delivered within a SEND setting without the learners previously receiving healthy relationship and consent sessions from the service. This approach supports the creation of a safe and comfortable learning environment, allowing the learners time to adjust to changes within their routine, and is an additional opportunity to forge relationships with the facilitator before talking about subjects that some learners may find more challenging to discuss. This approach also allows opportunities to reinforce previous learning in future sessions. Despite having this layered approach, this programme should continue to be viewed as a supplementary addition to the educational establishment's lifelong RSHE journey. For learners with more profound needs, the RSHE team will work with the educational establishment to tailor the specialist support they are able to offer.

Equality

Provide Community believe every young person should be entitled to good quality, inclusive RSHE, which young people feel is relevant and relatable to them, regardless of race, faith or belief, sexual orientation or gender, or disabilities, and representation from a variety of groups will be incorporated within sessions through images and scenarios. Sessions do not promote a particular sexuality, religion or gender, but throughout sessions references are made that respect and fairness should be shown to everyone, regardless of these characteristics.

All of our work is in line with Equality Act 2010 and government Equality Act advice for schools which can be found below.

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

Safeguarding and Confidentiality

The aim of RSHE is to keep children and young people safe, however due to the sensitive nature of the topic, there may be an increase in disclosures taking place.

All staff delivering on the service are trained in handling disclosures, and identifying potential safeguarding concerns and these will be handled in line with Provide safeguarding policy which can be found here.

<https://provide.metacompliance.com/View/Policy/4787335>

Should a member of the RSHE team identify a safeguarding concern, this concern will be passed on to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) within the educational setting who will respond in line with their organisational policy and procedures. Where possible, the RSHE facilitator will inform the individual that they are having to share information to keep them safe. Where required, local authority Safeguarding Children's Board pathways will be followed to ensure the protection of the young person.

Parents and Carers

The role of parents and carers in the development of their children's understanding about relationships and sexual health is vital. Children and young people themselves are also clear that they want to talk to their parents and carers about sex and relationships, but many parents and carers feel they lack the skills, confidence and knowledge to have these conversations⁶. The service recognises these challenges, and provides a variety of training offers, resources and materials to support parents and carers to have these conversations, these can be found on the local sexual health website under 'Parents and Carers'. The service actively encourages opportunities for parents and carers participation and will work with educational establishments to provide support for parents and carers.

It is the responsibility of the educational establishment to liaise with parents and carers regarding their programme of RSHE delivery, and to include information regarding external speakers that will be supporting in the delivery of the sessions. The service will share lesson plans and further reading materials with the educational establishment, designed to be shared with parents and carers ahead of the session taking place, to ensure a joint approach and transparency in what is being delivered. It is the responsibility of the educational establishment to share these resources, at their discretion, and also to inform parents and carers about the right to withdraw their child from elements of sex education should they wish to do so. Also note, 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.⁷

Monitoring, Evaluation and Assessment

The service utilises a variety of methods to monitor, evaluate and assess the content and packages that are delivered, including feedback forms and long-term impact surveys.

Responses are reviewed on a quarterly basis to look for reoccurring themes and adjustments are made as appropriate.

The RSHE team ensure to keep up to date with their own continued professional development (CPD) through uptake of regular training opportunities. The service also ensures to keep up to date with any changes in legislation and government guidance and ensure this is reflected within the sessions and the resources used.

The service recognises the value of involving young people and others that access its services in shaping its service offer and provide various opportunities for engagement and input through focus groups and surveys. ESHS staff will facilitate regular focus groups to explore a wide range of RSHE topics, the feedback gathered from these sessions will be actively used to inform and shape service delivery, ensuring that RSHE is responsive, inclusive, and designed to meet the needs of young people. By acting on this feedback, the service continually works to enhance the quality, relevance and accessibility of RSHE for all communities served.

The service is committed to maintaining high standards in the delivery of RSHE across all settings. To ensure consistency, effectiveness and adherence to policy expectations, current legislation and best practice in the delivery of RSHE, the quality of delivery will be routinely monitored and evaluated.

The RSHE Co-production Coordinator is responsible for implementing and overseeing robust quality assurance procedures. The RSHE Co-production Coordinator will carry out planned observations and shadowing of practitioners. Constructive feedback will be provided following each observation to support reflective practice and promote continuous improvement in RSHE delivery.

To provide feedback or to raise a complaint regarding the RSHE team please email provide.customerservices@nhs.net or view the complaints policy and procedure which can be found here [Contact Us | Provide Community](#)

Links to further Policies, Resources and Reading

Provide Community

[Transforming Lives with Innovative Health and Social Care | Provide Community](#)

Essex Sexual Health Service

<https://essexsexualhealthservice.org.uk/>

Young Persons Sexual Health Website

<https://askingforafriend.org.uk/>

Parents and Carers Resource Hub

<https://essexsexualhealthservice.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68b8499e11b4ded2da19fd92/Relationships_education_relationships_and_sex_education_and_health_education_-_statutory_guidance.pdf

Equality act 2010 and schools

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

SEND Code of practice

[SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Relationships and Sexual Health Education; The Evidence

[RSE The Evidence - SEF 2022.pdf \(sexeducationforum.org.uk\)](#)

Essex County Council RSE Survey

<https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/youth-service/rse-survey/>

Draft RSHE Statutory Guidance

[Review of the RSHE statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Guidance for Schools and Colleges: Gender Questioning

[Guidance for Schools and Colleges: Gender Questioning Children - Department for Education - Citizen Space](#)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6943d2da9273c48f554cf592/VAWG_01_Strategy_FINAL_171225_WEB.pdf

Freedom from violence and abuse: A cross-government strategy to build a safer society for women and girls

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6943d2da9273c48f554cf592/VAWG_01_Strategy_FINAL_171225_WEB.pdf

Appendix

1. Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019
2. Sex Education Forum, Relationship and Sex Education: The Evidence, 2022
3. Kirby 2007, UNESCO 2016 and NICE 2010.
4. Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019
5. Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2019
6. Sex Education Forum, Relationship and Sex Education: The Evidence, 2022
7. Department for Education, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, 2025

Abbreviation	Definition
RSHE	Relationship, Sex and Health Education
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
DfE	Department for Education
WHO	World Health Organisation
KS3	Key Stage 3 (year groups 7,8 and 9 age 11-14)
KS4	Key Stage 4 (learners age (year groups 10 and 11 age 14-16)
FE	Further Education
KS5	Key Stage 5 (year groups Year 12, 13, age 16 – 18)
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
SLA	Service Level Agreement
STI	Sexually Transmitted Infection
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus

Appendix A

The RSHE team work to the below DfE guidance

The Department of Education States that by the end of secondary school:

Schools should continue to develop knowledge of topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary:

Families	Curriculum content: 1. That there are different types of committed, stable relationships. 2. How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children. 3. Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony. 4. That 'common-law marriage' is a myth and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children. 5. That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal.⁸ 6. How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships. 7. The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development. 8. How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.
Respectful Relationships	Curriculum content: 1. The characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. 2. How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal. 3. The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others.

	4. What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs. 5. The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict. 6. The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. 7. Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration. 8. The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care, attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because someone says yes to doing something, that doesn't automatically make it ethically ok. 9. How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice. 10. How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others. 11. How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others. 12. Pupils should have an opportunity to discuss how some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called "involuntary celibates" (incels) or online influencers.
Online safety and awareness	Curriculum content: 1. Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. 2. Online risks, including the importance of being cautious about sharing personal information online and of using privacy and location settings appropriately to protect information online. Pupils should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues. 3. The characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and / or may post things which aren't real / have been created with AI. 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. 4. Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images. 5. That keeping or forwarding indecent 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 acquiring or generating indecent or sexual images of someone under 18, including the potential for criminal charges and severe penalties including imprisonment. Pupils should know how to seek support and should understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared. Pupils should also understand that sharing indecent images of people over 18 without consent is a crime. 6. What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online.⁹ 7. 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. 8. That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons. Pupils should be taught where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamorise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong. 9. That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice. 10. How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns. 11. That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. This can affect pupils who see pornographic content accidentally as well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it. 12. How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
--	---

	13. That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (e.g. to enable targeted advertising). 14. 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. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion. 15. That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. It is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk.
Being Safe	Curriculum content: 1. How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent. 2. That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others. 3. How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed. 4. How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. Pupils should learn ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. Pupils should understand that there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. Pupils might reflect on the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions. 5. What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it. 6. That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language / attention / touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting. 7. The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault. 8. The concepts and laws relating to harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language.

	9. The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour.¹⁰ 10. That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed. 11. The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation. 12. The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage. 13. 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 for anyone to perform or assist in the performance of FGM, virginity testing or hymenoplasty, in the UK or abroad, or to fail to protect a person under 16 for whom they are responsible. 14. That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury. That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death. 15. That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful. 16. How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse, and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault.
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	Curriculum content: 1. That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive. 2. 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. 3. Sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove 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. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent. 4. 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. 5. That some sexual behaviours can be harmful. 6. The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically

	accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making. 7. That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help. 8. How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, are transmitted. How risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use). The use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) and Post Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma. 9. The prevalence of STIs, the short and long term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. 10. How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour. 11. How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms. 12. How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
--	--