South East Essex Academy Trust

SEEAT Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE) 2026

Title	Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE)2026
Author	Caroline Thornton
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Part 1

School Information and Key Contacts

School Context: Westborough is a Primary school and we teach RSE across the school. Our RSE curriculum is taught through PSHE Association materials in the form of lesson plans and additional materials. We also use additional resources to support including some of the BBC teach videos and Twinkl.
Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Leader: **Charlie Russo**
Designated Safeguarding Lead: **Katy Doucy** **Tonya Brook**
Mental Health Lead: **Tonya Brook**
Headteacher: **Tonya Brook**

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2. Statement of Intent

This policy covers the SEEAT (South East Essex Academy Trust) approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We define 'Relationships and Sex Education' as the exploration of the emotional, social, cultural, and physical aspects of growing up, having sexual relationships, and learning about human sexuality and sexual health.

The intent of our Relationships and Sex Education is to help and support young people through their physical, emotional, and moral development. A successful programme, firmly embedded in PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic), will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood, through adolescence into adulthood.

It is important that we develop a curriculum and culture which educates our children and young people in wider contextual issues. Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is a vital part of the wider knowledge required by students to live happy and successful lives, whilst feeling confident in themselves.

We believe RSE is important for our students because it provides children and young people with the information, they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It enables students to know what a healthy relationship looks like and be able to recognise the dangers of unhealthy relationships.

We ensure RSE is inclusive and meets the needs of all our students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) by using fully accessible lesson materials and an open, discussion-led approach in the classroom.

Individual needs are catered for as they would be in any lessons. We ensure RSE fosters gender equality and LGBTQ+ equality by teaching about and promoting awareness of these issues across all year groups. At all times, the teaching of RSE remains respectful of the diversity of humanity and our school community.

We believe high quality RSE helps to create a safe school and safe communities as students learn to develop positive behaviour for life.

The intended outcomes of our programmes are that students will:

- Know and understand the emotional, social, cultural, and physical aspects of growing up and having relationships, including sexual relationships, so they can make informed, healthy decisions within the law.
- Understand that they have a right to their own identity and be able to express this, as well as a right to be safe and healthy.
- Understand that they have a responsibility to respect the diversity within humans and the choices that people make.
- Develop the skills of independent critical thought, analysis, and evaluation.

Signed: **Role:**

Date:

To be reviewed: June 2027

3. Aims and Objectives of the SEEAT RSE Programme

- To combat ignorance and increase understanding
- To encourage and promote responsible behaviour and ensure that students are aware of the consequences of unsafe sexual behaviour
- To reduce guilt and anxiety
- To encourage all students to have due regard for moral considerations and to act in ways which reflect concern for others as well as themselves
- To promote the ability to make and act upon informed decisions
- To provide opportunities to clarify values and attitudes connected with personal relationships
- To develop social and educational skills for future parents and child carers
- To combat exploitation and challenge sexism
- To discourage early sexual intercourse
- To facilitate, as may be necessary, students' access to further information, help and advice
- To deliver the sex and relationships education programme within a moral framework
- To develop students' self-confidence in dealing with their relationships with others
- To ensure that students are given valid and useful information on contraception
- To develop the students' awareness of differences in society – to combat homophobia and racism
- To equip pupils with the knowledge and skills to identify, challenge and report harmful sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercive behaviour and misogynistic narratives, and to understand how to seek help and support safely.

4. Statutory Requirements

As a cross-phase MAT (Multi Academy Trust), we are required to teach Relationships and Sex Education as part of our curriculum; we must provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

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) 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. Our schools work within the remit of the DfE (Department for Education) Statutory and compulsory teaching from September 2020.

5. Delivery of the Programme

RSE focuses on giving children and young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds. RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Some themes are also further developed in assemblies, events and via tutor programmes.

Every school delivers a comprehensive programme of RSE providing accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. This also provides our young people the essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful, and non-exploitative relationships, and staying safe both on and offline and giving them the ability to make informed life choices.

As pupils progress through secondary education, RSE explicitly includes learning designed to prevent and address sexual harassment and sexual violence, including peer-on-peer abuse, coercive or controlling behaviours, and the influence of harmful online content such as misogynistic narratives or influencers. Teaching focuses on recognising unacceptable behaviour, understanding consent and the law, challenging harmful attitudes, and knowing how and where to seek help.

The programme of study in each setting is relevant to the age and stage of all pupils, from our youngest learners in our primary settings, to our oldest students in post-16 education.

In our primary and junior schools' relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships

- Online relationships
- Being safe

Some elements may be taught through the computing and Science curriculum. Pupils also receive stand-alone sessions to prepare them for adolescence.

In Years 5 & 6 pupils are taught about body changes and what to expect as they grow into adults. Some aspects may be taught in single sex groups. Children with SEN (Special Educational Needs) are taught life skills to equip them in their lives as adults.

The RSE programme progresses as pupils move on to their secondary education, to include:

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

Schools will teach about these topics in a manner that:

• Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
• Is sensitive to all students' experiences
• During lessons, makes students feel safe and supported, and able to engage with the key messages

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi or Trans) 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, looked-after children or young carers).

RSE programmes are updated to reflect topical issues, which may vary school to school. External experts will be invited to assist from time-to-time with the delivery of the sex and relationship education programme but will comply with the provisions of this policy. Please see Appendix B.

The Trust understands that students with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) are entitled to learn about relationship and sex education, and the programme will be designed to be inclusive of all students.

If students ask questions outside this policy, staff will respond appropriately so they are fully informed and do not seek answers online.

For more information about an individual school's RSE curriculum, please refer to Appendix 1.

6. Training

The staff teaching RSE across the Trust will undergo training on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date with the sex and relationship education programme. Training of staff will also be scheduled around any updated guidance on the RSE programme, or to reflect any changes to statutory guidance and policy.

Designated Safeguarding leads will provide guidance and support as appropriate to their individual schools.

Leaders responsible for RSE will ensure that teachers delivering the programme receive appropriate training in topics relating to RSE and provide support and guidance on how to deliver lessons on sensitive, and sometimes controversial issues. Leaders will also ensure that all staff are up to-date with policy changes, and familiar with school policy and guidance relating to RSE.

Trained staff will be able to give students advice on where and how to obtain information or further support, and where appropriate signpost students to additional support and guidance.

Where appropriate schools will organise visiting experts for students and may use other professionals to deliver staff training to the RSE team.

7. Policy & Curriculum Development

The sex and relationship education programme in each school is developed in conjunction with the views of teachers and students, in accordance with DfE recommendations and the support of the national PSHE Association - www.pshe-association.org.uk

Individual sex and relationship education programmes are also directed by the research findings and reflect the results of student responses to surveys and questionnaires.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body will:

• Monitor and evaluate the impact of the RSE Policy, to hold headteachers to account for its implementation.

Headteachers will:

• Ensure that RSE is taught consistently across the school
• Manage requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSE
• Monitor student progress and development of their knowledge.

Staff will:

• Deliver RSE in a sensitive way
• Model positive attitudes to RSE
• Monitor student progress and development of their knowledge
• Respond to the needs of each individual student

• Respond appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from non-statutory components of the RSE curriculum.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of delivering RSE. Those who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

All form tutors, science teachers and religious education teachers are responsible for delivering the RSE curriculum.

Students will:

• Be expected to engage fully in RSE
• Respond and interact with others in a civil and respectful manner
• Approach topics and points for discussion sensitively, bearing in mind situations that their peers may be facing outside school
• Be open-minded and refrain from judging others.

9. Working with Parents

The role of parents in the development of their children's understanding about relationships is vital. Parents are the first teachers of their children. They have the most significant influence in enabling their children to grow and mature and form healthy relationships.

The school provides parents and guardians with clear information about the RSE curriculum, and may consult about curriculum development, allowing them the opportunity to understand the purpose and content of the RSE programme of study. Parents are encouraged to ask questions about the school's approach, to help increase their confidence in the curriculum for their child or young person. Opportunities to understand the purpose and content of RSE through the content will vary school to school, and may include information on the school's website, newsletters, parents' evenings, personal communication, workshops, and parent/ pupil surveys.

This is an important opportunity to talk to our schools about how these subjects contribute to wider support, in terms of student wellbeing and keeping children safe

10. Parents' Right to Withdraw

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

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher of the child's school, outlining the reason for their request. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. If necessary, the Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative schoolwork will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

11. Equal Opportunities

The Trust understands and abides by The Equality Act 2010 and fully respects the rights of students and staff members, regardless of any protected characteristics that he/she / they may have.

Our academies are dedicated to delivering the sex and relationship education programme with sensitivity and respect, avoiding any derogatory or prejudicial terms or language which may cause offence.

Our schools will ensure that teachers only express their personal views or beliefs, in the context of providing equal opportunity and tolerance for all, when delivering the programme.

12. Safeguarding

Our RSE curriculum plays a key preventative role in safeguarding children and young people, including helping pupils recognise, challenge and seek support in relation to harmful behaviours such as sexual harassment, sexual violence, coercive or controlling behaviour, and misogynistic attitudes, both online and offline.

Schools recognise that issues explored through RSE, including sexual harassment, sexual violence and harmful sexual behaviour between peers, may overlap with safeguarding concerns. Staff follow the school's safeguarding procedures in line with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* where disclosures or concerns arise, including peer-on-peer abuse or online-facilitated harm.

Schools are aware that some of the issues discussed within the RSE Curriculum need to be broadly considered within the context of safeguarding. All teachers need to be aware of the four types of abuse: physical, emotional, sexual and neglect; understanding they do not exist in isolation from each other. All staff across the Trust undergo safeguarding training annually. Some of the content of the RSE programme can bring to light some extremely sensitive issues. If staff members have a concern about the safety or if there is an immediate risk of harm to a child, they should refer this to the schools Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately. Staff are aware of the reporting requirements regarding known cases of FGM (Female Genital Mutilation) on children and young people under the age of 18; they understand their duty to report known cases to the police.

Confidentiality within the classroom is a key component of sex and relationship education, and teachers are expected to respect the confidentiality of their students, using clear ground rules for discussion in every class, so that students also respect each other's confidentiality.

13. Use of Resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage, and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics

- Fit into our curriculum plan

- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and will not provoke distress.

Appropriate diagrams, videos, discussion, and practical activities will be used to assist learning. Inappropriate images, videos, etc. will not be used, and resources will be selected with sensitivity given to the age, religion, and cultural background of all students.

Students will be prevented from accessing inappropriate materials on the internet when using such to assist with their learning. The prevention measures taken to ensure this are outlined in the schools the schools Online Safety Policy, and Acceptable Terms of Use Agreement.

14. Use of External Organisations and Materials

Many of the resources used throughout the RSE curriculum are school generated, however some are created with the help of outside agencies such as the 'Prince Charming Theatre Company,' the school nursing service (Southend-On-Sea), the Essex Child and Family Well-being Service (Essex) and the NSPCC. The Brook Sexual Health team, and SOS Rape Crisis can provide valuable materials, on consent for example. We will make sure that any agency and or materials used, are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

15. Monitoring and Review

The personnel responsible for monitoring RSE will differ from school to school, based on the distribution of leadership responsibilities. Please refer to page one, of this policy to view the individual arrangements for the relevant school.

RSE delivery will be monitored and evaluated through line management, learning walks, work sampling, student and parent voice, questionnaires, and curriculum planning documents.

In all schools' students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Local Governing Body annually. Any changes needed to the policy, including changes to the programme, will be implemented by the Headteacher and / or the identified lead for RSE.

Any changes to the policy will be clearly communicated to all members of staff involved in the sex and relationship education programme.

RSE provision, content and delivery will be regularly monitored by the Head of RSE, in line with the current guidance from the DfE and the needs of our students.

Appendix A

Overview of Curriculum Content

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Year 1	Making friends: playing and learning together	Mental health and wellbeing	Celebrating me, you and our families	Safety at home	Being healthy	Showing kindness to ourselves and others
Year 2	Mental health and wellbeing	Keeping safe online	Me, my body and staying safe	Money and work	Safety outside the home	Looking back and moving on
Year 3	Me, my friends and belonging	Mental health and wellbeing	Building healthy habits	Making choices online	Keeping safe out and about	Looking out for each other
Year 4	Mental health and wellbeing	Exploring ways to manage risk	Forming respectful relationships	Money matters and news literacy	Me, my body and growing up	Families and growing together
Year 5	Friendships, stereotypes and bullying	Mental health and wellbeing	Positively engaging with our world	Respecting boundaries	Safe connections online	Embedding healthy habits and learning first aid
Year 6	Mental health and wellbeing	Managing money and online spending	Changes in puberty *(and sex education)*	Drug education: assessing risk and managing influences	Developing our AI literacy	Looking to the future

Curriculum Overview – **click to access**

Appendix B

Guidance on Working with External Partners to deliver RSE

Each school is responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, and resources used do not undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs

Schools will:

• Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:

- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with students' developmental stage
- Comply with this policy and The Teachers Standards, The Equality Act 2010, The Human Rights Act 1998, and The Education Act 1996

• Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach, and the resources it uses

• Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum

• Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with

• Be clear on:
    - What they are going to say
    - Their position on the issues to be discussed

• Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
• Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
• Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
• Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
• Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
• Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers We will not, under any circumstances:
    - Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
    - Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

References – Links to Guidance and Useful Information

National PSHE Association - www.pshe-association.org.uk

Education Act 2002. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/data.pdf

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education – DfE February 2025. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education

Education Act (2006). https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/contents

Learning and Skills Act (2000). https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/21/contents

Equality Act (2010). https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents

Children and Social work Act (2017). https://www.socialworkengland.org.uk/about/publications/children-and-social-work-act-2017/

Keeping Children Safe in Education – statutory safeguarding guidance (2025). - Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025

PREVENT Duty Guidance 2023 - PREVENT Duty Guidance 2023

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - Working Toegther to Safeguard Children 2023

Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools and Colleges 2023 - Meeting Digital and Technology Standards in Schools 2023

Teachers' Standards. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards

Useful DfE weblink: https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education