



omega
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Version Number	1.3
Date policy last reviewed	May 2026
Policy Type	Statutory
Owner	Director of Education
Approved By	Trust Board
Approval Date	
Next Review Date	June 2027

Review Date & Summary Changes

July 2024	
1. Introduction and policy context	Updated to reflect that the guidance is no longer new. Removal of a paragraph starting “The government’s shift in guidance on sex and relationship education.”
3. Statutory requirements	We also have regard to legal duties set out in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996 • Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010 • The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities.
7. Delivery of RSE	Across our trust, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.
7. Delivery of RSE	Addition of 7.1 Inclusivity and 7.2 Use of Resources to provide more detail on the delivery of the curriculum
8. Use of External Organisations and Materials	Addition of paragraph detailing the Trust approach to working with any external agencies in the delivery of RSE
9. Roles and Responsibilities	Clarification of the difference in responsibilities between the Trust Board and the Local Governing Body. Addition of the sentence in paragraph 9.4 stating that the Headteacher is responsible for making sure that resources and materials are shared with parents and carers in line with updated guidance
May 2026 Updates are highlighted within the document	
4. Policy development	Insertion of Director of Education and Director of Safeguarding as responsible for reviewing the policy
7. Delivery of RSE	More details on how RSE will be delivered including examples of teaching strategies and where appropriate making links with other subjects. Strengthened importance of secondary pupils knowing about legal aspects relating to certain topics covered under RSE and importance of protected characteristics.
7.1 Inclusivity	Strengthened emphasis on teachers creating right conditions to enable all pupils to engage with RSE, including teaching materials.

8. Use of external organisations and materials	Addition of expectation that agencies will allow their materials to be shared with parents and carers.
9. Roles and responsibilities	Addition of paragraph 9.4 to include role of Director of Education
9.5 Staff	Strengthening expectations around modelling of behaviours and duty to report safeguarding disclosures arising from subject content to DSL.
Appendix 1 & Appendix 2	DFE have provided significant updates to the knowledge which primary and secondary pupils should know by the end of their education phase (for implementation from September 2026). Statements which have been highlighted are areas which are new, expanded or have been strengthened from 1 st September 2026.

Signed by:



CEO

Date:

Chair of Trustees

Date:

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1. Introduction and policy context

The schools within Omega Multi-Academy Trust will provide age-appropriate relationships education to all pupils as part of the school's statutory curriculum. The Trust aims to assure parents and pupils that all aspects of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) will be delivered in a safe space, allowing time and compassion for questions at a level that every pupil understands. Sensitive topics relating to RSE will be delivered in a sensitive manner as part of a whole-school approach where parents and teachers work in partnership.

Under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, the government made Relationships Education part of the basic curriculum for primary pupils and therefore compulsory at primary schools (including maintained schools and academies).

The key topics applicable for all key stages have been carefully planned in consultation with responses from parents, young people, schools and experts. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss this policy at any time and staff will be provided with accurate training and further resources to deliver lessons to pupils.

This policy sets out the framework for our relationships and sex education curriculum, providing clarity on how it is informed, organised and delivered at different phases of education.

2. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) within Omega Multi-Academy Trust are to:

- To ensure Relationships and Sex Education is part of a child's broad, balanced curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all-round development.
- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop a positive and secure personal identity and feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To prepare children for healthy relationships in an online world
- To understand how to stay safe, know the importance of boundaries and how to report abuse or feelings of being unsafe

3. Statutory requirements

Our primary and secondary academy schools within Omega Multi-Academy Trust must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

We follow the National Curriculum, including requirements to teach science. This would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum at primary level.

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). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Within Omega Multi-Academy Trust we teach Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as set out in this policy.

4. Policy development

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

1. Review – The Director of Education and Director of Safeguarding have reviewed the policy, drawing on all relevant information including national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all staff within Omega MAT were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties received consultation information, had the opportunity to complete a parent/carer survey and were also invited to attend a Omega MAT RSE Information evening about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE policy through individual schools' Student Voice groups.
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with local governors and the board of trustees for ratification.

5. Definitions

The Primary Schools in Omega MAT will provide relationships education and those aspects of sex education that are covered in the National Curriculum for primary science. They will not teach sex education outside of the remit of the National Curriculum for primary science.

The Statutory National Curriculum for Science covers human reproduction, changes from birth to old age including puberty as noted below:

Statutory requirements

Pupils should be taught to:

- describe the changes as humans develop to old age.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)

- Pupils should draw a timeline to indicate stages in the growth and development of humans. They should learn about the changes experienced in puberty.
- Pupils could work scientifically by researching the gestation periods of other animals and comparing them with humans; by finding out and recording the length and mass of a baby as it grows.

Statutory Relationships Education is the programme of work that forms part of the basic curriculum. It covers all types of relationships including online, peer to peer, family and carer relationships. It also covers respect for others and staying safe.

Sex Education is a programme of work that covers romantic relationships, personal, physical and mental health, preparation and responding to puberty, personal safety.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity or sexual preference.

6. Curriculum

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance, and share any relevant materials on request.

We will share any curriculum resources and materials with parents on request.

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

Primary sex education beyond the Science curriculum is not compulsory in primary schools and the Primary schools in Omega MAT will only teach those aspects of sex education which are covered in the National Curriculum for primary science;

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings (included in the primary Science curriculum)

7. Delivery of RSE

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).

Primary 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, kind relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe

Primary sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived and born

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate strategies to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities

For more information about what pupils are expected to know by the end of primary school see [Appendix 1](#).

Secondary schools:

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

- Families
- Respectful relationships
- Online safety and awareness
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, 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 complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, schools will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching. The RSE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate strategies to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will make sure that pupils understand the importance of equality and respect, and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education. The curriculum is designed to include pupils of all gender identities, and activities will be planned to make sure all are actively involved.

Across our trust, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

It is important for secondary pupils to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils identify what is right and wrong, and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- Marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
- Consent, including the age of consent

- Domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), ‘virginity testing’ and hymenoplasty
- Sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour, and online behaviours
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion
- Pornography
- Abortion
- The protected characteristics
- The age of criminal responsibility

For more information about what pupils should know by the end of secondary school, see [Appendix 2](#). In addition, information on the curriculum is available on the website of our secondary schools. Each school will inform parents of the overall aims and contents of the curriculum to be taught prior to the start of the year group delivery.

7.1 Inclusivity

Teachers will make sure that all pupils’ views are listened to, and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the ages of the pupils.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to make sure both are actively involved.

Schools will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Our schools will teach about these topics in a manner that

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils’ experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

They will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that’s appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

7.2 Use of resources

Our schools will consider whether any resources they plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- 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 pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

8. Use of external organisations and materials

Across our trust, we will make sure that any agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

We remain responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't 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.

Our 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 pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where they 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're 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 usual safeguarding procedures for these people

- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to the school, 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
- Share any external materials with parents and carers

Our academies **won't**, 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
- Work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 The Trust Board

The Trust Board for Omega MAT will approve the RSE policy, and through the Local Governing Body, will hold each headteacher to account for its implementation.

9.2 Local Governing Bodies

Local Governing Bodies are responsible for supporting the implementation of the policy at their school and reporting issues to the Trust Board if they occur.

9.4 Director of Education

They will:

- Review and develop the policy for approval by the Trust Board
- Ensure that staff, parents/carers and pupils are consulted on the policy
- Work with headteachers to make sure they can implement the policy in their school
- Report to the board of trustees on any issues with its implementation across the trust

9.5 The Headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across their school, for making sure that resources and materials are shared with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 10).

9.5 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

➤ Modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes

➤ Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL)

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE. Staff, however, who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with their headteacher.

Each school has an identified member of staff who is responsible for the co-ordination of RSE/PSHE.

9.6 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

9.7 Parents & carers

Omega MAT recognises that parents and carers are the primary figures in helping their children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up and therefore have the responsibility in preparing them for challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings; we aim to support parents in this responsibility.

Parents are therefore encouraged to support the schools Relationship and Sex Education programme and have access to this policy via the school website. The school plays its part in ensuring that parents are kept up to date in developments in RSE including the content and organisation of the Relationship and Sex Education programme.

Under the RSE and Health Education (RSHE) guidance 2020, RSHE education is statutory, meaning that in primary school, children cannot be withdrawn from any aspect of relationship or health education, as this is seen as vital to developing them as well-rounded human beings. This includes any topic which falls in both the RSHE Curriculum as well as the Science curriculum e.g. puberty, changes to human bodies as you age, the biological naming of body parts and reproduction. Children also cannot be withdrawn from any aspect of the RSHE which falls within other statutory National Curriculum subjects e.g. ESafety.

10. Parents' right to withdraw

Primary schools:

Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE. However, as previously stated, primary schools in Omega MAT will only be teaching statutory aspects of sex education as identified in the National Curriculum for primary science, so there will be no right to withdraw pupils.

Secondary schools:

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

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

11. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

12. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by each individual schools' RSE / PSHE Lead and SLT through:

- Planning scrutiny, work scrutiny, learning walks, lesson observations and Student Voice activities.
- Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed annually by Omega Multi-Academy Trust. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Trustees in consultation with the Executive Team and Headteachers. Any changes of policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

Appendix 1: By the end of primary school pupils should know (highlighted is anything new from 1st September 2026)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families and people who care about me	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage and civil partnerships represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed
Caring friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. Pupils should learn skills for developing caring, kind friendships • That not every child will have the friends they would like at all times, that most people feel lonely sometimes, and that there is no shame in feeling lonely or talking about it • The characteristics of friendships that lead to happiness and security, including mutual respect, honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences, and support with problems and difficulties • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened • How to manage conflict, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, and how to get support when needed

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful, kind relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to pay attention to the needs and preferences of others, including in families and friendships. Pupils should be encouraged to discuss how we balance the needs and wishes of different people in relationships and why this can be complicated • The importance of setting and respecting healthy boundaries in relationships with friends, family, peers and adults • How to communicate effectively and manage conflict with kindness and respect; how to be assertive and express needs and boundaries; how to manage feelings, including disappointment and frustration • Pupils should have opportunities to discuss the difference between being assertive and being controlling, and conversely the difference between being kind to other people and neglecting your own needs • That they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and the importance of respecting others, including those who are different (e.g. physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices, or have different preferences or beliefs • The importance of respecting others, even when they're very different from them (e.g. physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take and skills they can develop in a range of different contexts to improve or support their relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. Pupils should have opportunities to think about how they foster their own self-esteem and build a strong sense of their own identity, including through developing skills and interests • The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult), and how to get help • What a stereotype is, how stereotypes can be unfair, negative, destructive or lead to bullying and how to challenge a stereotype • How to seek help when needed, including when they are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online safety and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people should be respectful in online interactions, and that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including where people are anonymous. For example, the importance of avoiding putting pressure on others to share information and images online, and strategies for resisting peer pressure • How to critically evaluate their online relationships and sources of information, including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. For example, that people sometimes behave differently online, including pretending to be someone else, or pretending to be a child, and that this can lead to dangerous situations. How to recognise harmful content or harmful contact, and how to report this • That there is a minimum age for joining social media sites (currently 13), which protects children from inappropriate content or unsafe contact with older social media users, who may be strangers, including other children and adults • The importance of exercising caution about sharing any information about themselves online. Understanding the importance of privacy and location settings to protect information online • Online risks, including that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once a picture or words has been circulated there is no way of deleting it everywhere and no control over where it ends up • That the internet contains a lot of content that can be inappropriate and upsetting for children, and where to go for advice and support when they feel worried or concerned about something they have seen or engaged with online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including online). This can include learning about boundaries in play and in negotiations about space, toys, books, resources etc. • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults (including that it's not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe) • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate/unsafe physical and other contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online), including those they do and do not know • How to recognise when a relationship is harmful or dangerous, including skills for recognising who to trust and who not to trust • How to report abuse, concerns about something seen online or experienced in real life, or feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Changing Adolescent Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes. • About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know (as well as continuing to develop knowledge on the topics they're expected to study at primary school). These are the expectations set by the Department for Education. (highlighted are areas which are new, expanded or have been strengthened from 1st September 2026)

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children • 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, e.g. undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony • That 'common-law marriage' is a myth, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children • That forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal • How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships • 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 • 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. The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 • 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 • What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs • 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 • 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 • Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration • 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 • 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 • 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 • 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 • 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

- Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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.
- 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
- That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice
- 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
- 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	<p data-bbox="533 355 2029 416">well as those who see it deliberately. Pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it</p> <ul data-bbox="533 427 2074 730" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="533 427 1402 456">• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online <li data-bbox="533 467 2074 528">• 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) <li data-bbox="533 539 2074 632">• 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 <li data-bbox="533 643 2074 730">• 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

- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- 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
- The concepts and laws relating to sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault
- 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
- The concepts and laws relating to domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour
- That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed
- The concepts and laws relating to harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation
- The concepts and laws relating to forced marriage
- 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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• 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• 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive • 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 • 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 • 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 • That some sexual behaviours can be harmful • 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 • 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 • 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 • The prevalence of STIs, the short- and long-term impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour • How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms • 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

Appendix 3: Parent form: right to withdraw from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	