



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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1. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- 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 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

Our school values are Employable, Sociable, Ready. An excellent RSHE policy intertwined with not just our PSHE lessons but imbedded within the curriculum will help our students build their individual foundations, understanding their own value and becoming 'self managers'. Our students will be more sociable and gain confidence and skills to help them become positive members of society. Excellent RSHE at school is linked to keeping yourself safe, goal setting, strong peer relationships, social skills, a good work ethic and a safe lifestyle

1.1 The aims of relationships and sex education (RSHE) at our school are to:

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- Help pupils develop 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
- Raise awareness of sources of help and develop the skills and confidence to access confidential advice, support and treatment where necessary, and to understand boundaries, consent, coercion and exploitation.
- To help pupils understand and recognise different forms of abuse such as domestic violence, sexual violence, controlling behaviours, coercion and exploitation
- To teach pupils about different forms of harassment the law and the different avenues of help available.
- To raise awareness of stereotypes, prejudice and equality.

2. Statutory requirements

ReFocus is an independent alternative-provision school for Key Stage 4. Relationships and sex education is compulsory for pupils receiving secondary education under section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.

ReFocus will meet the same RSHE expectations as state academies and will have regard to the Department for Education's statutory Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance introduced on 1 September 2026, including the appropriate health content within its integrated RSHE programme.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 403, 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, including the requirements for suitable PSHE, preparation for life in British society and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

At ReFocus, we teach RSHE as set out in this policy

3. Policy development

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

1. Review – members of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/carer consultation – parents and carers were invited to comment on the policy, curriculum content, timing and teaching materials
4. Pupil consultation – We used discussion, questionnaires, and anecdotal feedback from staff to identify specific pupil requirements.
5. Approval – once amendments were made, the policy was reviewed by the governing board, including the Safeguarding Governor, and approved by the proprietor

4. Definition

Relationships and sex education (RSE), taught within ReFocus's wider RSHE programme, supports pupils' physical, moral, social and emotional development and prepares them for adulthood. It develops understanding of family life, stable and caring relationships, respect, consent, sexual health, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity so that pupils can make responsible and well-informed decisions.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC) is the development of our students own ability to be reflective about their own beliefs (religious or otherwise) and perspective on life. It is the development of knowledge and respect of different people's faiths, feeling and values. This is for students individual development within society, to prepare them for opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

British values - a government initiative to teach students the values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of others

5. Curriculum

Our Key Stage 4 RSHE curriculum is set out in Appendix 1 and is reviewed and adapted where necessary to meet pupils' needs and the September 2026 statutory guidance.

We develop the curriculum through engagement with parents/carers, pupils and staff, taking account of pupils' age, developmental stage, needs and experiences. For each commissioned pupil, ReFocus will establish what RSHE has already been taught by the commissioning school, identify gaps and avoid unnecessary repetition. Teachers will answer questions factually, sensitively and in line with the planned curriculum, safeguarding procedures and any applicable withdrawal arrangement.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers upon request.

6. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is taught through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum, supported by relevant biological content and carefully planned standalone or targeted sessions where appropriate.

Other aspects of PSHE are taught within Aims Personal, Sociable development (PSD) qualification. Topics within PSD lessons include Hate Crime, LGBTQ+ Community, understanding the news, drugs & Alcohol awareness, Careers and global issues.

- RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:
- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our PSHE curriculum

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, LGBTQ+ 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).

ReFocus recognises that a single approach will not meet every pupil's needs. Teaching will be adaptive and accessible, with reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, communication needs or disabilities, and sensitive planning for pupils affected by trauma, abuse, exploitation or harmful sexual behaviour.

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.

6.1 Inclusivity

We 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

We 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 or digital formats
- Use adaptive teaching, accessible formats and reasonable adjustments appropriate to each pupil's needs

6.2 Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching
- requirements set out in the statutory RSHE 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 and compatible with effective teaching
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences, use appropriate distancing techniques and do not cause unreasonable alarm. External providers' credentials, materials and lesson plans will be checked in advance; ReFocus retains responsibility for delivery and safeguarding.

7. Roles and responsibilities

7.1 Proprietor, governing board and Headteacher

The proprietor retains legal accountability and approves this policy. The owners and Headteacher are supported by the governing board, including the Safeguarding Governor, in reviewing curriculum quality, safeguarding, accessibility and implementation. The Headteacher ensures consistent delivery and decides requests for withdrawal from sex education.

7.2 Staff will:

- Deliver RSHE in a sensitive way
- Model positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitor progress
- Respond to the needs of individual pupils
- Respond appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSHE
- Take all disclosures and safeguarding concerns seriously, reassure pupils that abuse is never their fault, never promise confidentiality, and report concerns immediately in accordance with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about their knowledge, confidence or training should discuss these promptly with the Headteacher.

7.3 Pupils are:

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

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents may request that their child is withdrawn from some or all sex education delivered as part of RSE. Before deciding the request, the Headteacher will discuss it with the parent and, where appropriate, the pupil, including the purpose of the curriculum, the pupil's views and the possible effects of withdrawal. A request will normally be granted but may be refused in exceptional circumstances, including a safeguarding concern or particular vulnerability. From three terms before the pupil turns 16, the pupil may choose to receive sex education and ReFocus will arrange this.

A pupil cannot be withdrawn from relationships education, the school's core PSHE and safeguarding content, or relevant science content. A pupil who is withdrawn will receive appropriate, purposeful alternative education.

Parents are encouraged to raise requests at the earliest opportunity and confirm them in writing. The request, discussion, pupil's views where appropriate, decision, reasons, alternative provision and any later pupil decision to opt in will be recorded on the educational record.

Staff are expected to deliver the agreed curriculum within their role and receive appropriate induction, subject knowledge, safeguarding support and continuing professional development.

Resources on GOV.UK available as a one-stop page for teaching staff which can be accessed on the website under the heading: Teaching about relationships, sex, and health. This also includes training modules.

Other resources can be found on:

- DFE advice for schools: [teaching online safety in schools](#)
- UK council for Internet safety (UKCIS) guidance: [Education for a connected world](#)
- UKCIS guidance: [Sharing nudes and semi nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people](#).
- The UKCIS [external visitor guidance](#)

9. Monitoring arrangements

Delivery is monitored by the Headteacher and designated RSHE lead, with governing-board support.

Monitoring includes curriculum coverage and sequencing, teaching quality, accessibility, pupil knowledge and progress, safeguarding themes, parent and pupil feedback and coordination with commissioners.

10. Training

Staff receive RSHE training through induction and continuing professional development, including subject knowledge, handling difficult questions, SEND, safeguarding, disclosures and safe teaching of sensitive content.

The Headteacher may use suitably checked external specialists. ReFocus remains responsible for the content and delivery, will review credentials, materials and lesson plans in advance, and will agree confidentiality and safeguarding arrangements before any session

Appendix 3: Parent/carer form: request for withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carer		Date	
Reason for requesting withdrawal from sex education within RSE			
Pupil's views and any other information for the school to consider			
Parent signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Decision and agreed actions	