Emerson Park Academy

RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Reviewed: November 2026

Next review: November 2027

Introduction

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is part of a lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. At EPA, RSE is centred on personal safety, caring for others and building strong family relationships. This is coupled with teaching students about sexual health (including safe sex), and sexuality. Effective relationships and sex education is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives; this includes a detailed understanding of what consent is, how consent can be given, withheld, or withdrawn at any time, and what healthy, respectful relationships look like.

RSE at EPA is intended to help pupils learn about relationships, emotions, sexuality and sexual health. We aim to present relevant facts in an objective and balanced manner. Lessons are set in the context of family, friends and wider societal issues and address responsibilities that arise within these relationships.

RSE at EPA will help young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood, with a focus on the connection between healthy relationships and positive mental health.

Legislation & Statutory Guidance

We are required to teach RSE as part of statutory guidance set out by the Department for Education in a document entitled: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education*.

This policy operates in full compliance with relevant statutory obligations and legislation, including:

- **Section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017**, which mandates RSE in all secondary schools.
- **The Equality Act 2010** and the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), ensuring equal opportunities and protection against discrimination across all protected characteristics (including sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, disability, race, and religion or belief).
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)** statutory guidance, ensuring direct alignment between RSE delivery, child protection, and wider safeguarding processes.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) & The Equality Act 2010

The delivery of RSE at EPA is underpinned by the following moral and ethical statements:

- The delivery of RSE is factual, sensitive, age-appropriate, and balanced.
- RSE within the school promotes meaningful, loving, and healthy relationships.

- Whilst delivering RSE staff will avoid the imposition of personal opinions or political views. Instead, they will stay focused on the social, moral, spiritual, health and education aspects of the topics.
- Content relating to biological sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity is taught neutrally and factually without promoting specific unevidenced views as established fact, while strictly avoiding language that enforces gender stereotypes.
- LGBT+ content (including healthy same-sex relationships) is integrated naturally across the scheme of work rather than treated as a standalone or optional topic.

Across the faiths, there is obviously some variation in attitudes and outlooks in regard to Relationships and Sex. Whilst such views are not necessarily shared by all, they must be respected by all as there are “No Outsiders” within our community. EPA is respectful of all cultural and religious differences.

Parental Rights and Material Transparency

Parents/Carers are welcome to view all learning resources and scheme-of-work materials used as part of RSE, including materials provided by third-party external providers. Please contact info@emersonparkacademy.org to arrange an appointment or request access.

Parents also have the right to request their child is removed from the non-statutory sex education components of RSE until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education, the school will arrange for them to receive it. Please contact info@emersonparkacademy.org if you wish to discuss this further.

Note: Parents/Carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from statutory Relationships Education, Health Education, or the statutory National Curriculum for Science.

The Teaching of Relationships and Sex Education

RSE is taught across the curriculum but specifically in PSHE (delivered in the Summer Term of the Cultural Studies programme) and Science. Teaching is adapted and differentiated appropriately to ensure that pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) can fully access all topics.

Form activities and assemblies form a vital part of the PSHE curriculum and many aspects of healthy relationships, including online safety and consent, will be delivered at these times. Our form time programme is delivered by form tutors, but avoids the more sensitive topics, which are delivered within Cultural Studies, or by a PSHE specialist during drop down sessions at KS4.

Some relevant sessions in the hall will also take place with each year group throughout the year.

Year 7 Topics

- Healthy relationships, ethical behaviour, and understanding consent (including the right to withhold or remove consent at any time).
- Puberty - including physical and emotional changes to the body.
- Introduction to Contraception.
- Online safety, digital footprint, and managing online peer pressures.
- *In Science:* the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems including the menstrual cycle, pregnancy and birth.

Year 8 Topics

- Healthy relationships, respect, and communication.
- Contraception methods and choices.
- Introduction to common sexually transmitted infections.
- Online safety: image-based abuse, cyberbullying, and understanding digital boundary setting.

Year 9 Topics

- Healthy relationships, consent, and dynamic power imbalances in relationships.
- Contraception and barrier methods.
- Sexually Transmitted Infections.
- High risk behaviour, illegal content sharing, and online exploitation/harassment.
- Understanding deepfakes, AI chatbots/fake intimacy, "sextortion", and online financial scams/fraud.

Year 10 Topics

- Healthy relationships, mutual respect, and legal definitions of consent.
- Getting to know your body for lumps and understanding early detection/health checks.
- Mental health, coping strategies, and suicide prevention/self-harm protocols (delivered factually in consultation with medical guidelines without detailing specific methods).

Year 11 Topics

- Healthy relationships, emotional readiness, and commitment.
- Contraception and pregnancy choices.
- Sexually Transmitted Infections and sexual health services access.
- Checking your body for lumps.
- Navigating adult digital environments safely and recognizing online coercion or abuse.
- *In Science:* the structure of the female reproductive system, menstrual cycle and its hormonal control, contraception.

Form Time

During form time the pupils have weekly PSHE sessions delivered by their form tutor. The programme is delivered using presentations from the Careers and PSHE provider Unifrog. Unifrog offers a spiral curriculum, with topics and themed introduced in year 7, revisited across the years, increasing in depth and complexity, as appropriate for their age and maturity.

External Speakers & Third-Party Providers

Where external organisations or guest speakers are invited to contribute to the RSE curriculum, all sessions and materials are thoroughly vetted by the Social Science Faculty prior to delivery. External providers are required to adhere to school safeguarding protocols and align fully with the provisions of this policy and DfE statutory guidance.

Safety, Confidentiality & Safeguarding

During any RSHE session there is a focus on keeping children safe, this is in conjunction with the document *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.

Children are made aware as to how they can raise any concerns they have and who the Designated Safeguarding Lead is. Children are also informed that EPA cannot promise confidentiality, but all matters will be dealt with appropriately and in a supportive manner, with the child's best interest in mind.

Teaching around sensitive health topics (such as self-harm or suicide awareness) strictly adheres to safe practice guidelines: discussions avoid describing specific methods or instructions and focus on support pathways and professional assistance.

Ground Rules

All sessions begin with a reminder about the ground rules.

1. Use appropriate and scientific names for body parts.
2. Do not refer to a personal situation or ask personal questions.
3. Do not attempt to embarrass anyone in the classroom.
4. If you have any concerns following the lesson talk to an adult you can trust as soon as possible.
5. Remember in school we can support you but we cannot promise confidentiality if a safety risk is identified.

Monitoring & Evaluation of RSE

The Social Science Faculty plan and monitor the delivery of the RSE spiral programme and ensure that all aspects of RSE are covered as defined in government guidance. Delivery is regularly evaluated through lesson observations, learning walks, and student voice feedback.

The RSE policy and curriculum are reviewed on an annual basis. As part of effective RSE provision, the RSE policy should be reviewed every September by the Social Science Faculty and Senior Leadership Team to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of pupils and staff and that it is in line with current Department for Education statutory advice and guidance.