STRATFORD GIRLS' GRAMMAR SCHOOL

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON

Relationships & Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Disclosable under the Freedom of Information Act 2000	Yes
To be published on the website	Yes
Policy ownership	
Governor committee:	Progress & Well-being
Department responsible:	Senior Leadership Team
Post-holder: (title and name)	Bryony Jones, Head of PSHE
Linked procedures	PSHE & SMSC Policies
Responsible person	Gurd Ubhie
Implementation date	September 2026
Planned review interval	Every three years
Planned next review date	September 2029

Introduction

Children and young people grow up in an increasingly complex world, both online and offline. RSE helps students to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills needed to form healthy relationships, make informed decisions, manage risk and seek help when needed.

At Stratford Girls' Grammar School, RSE supports students' physical, moral, emotional and social development. It promotes respect, care and responsibility; provides factual knowledge about relationships and sexual health; and enables students to understand the influences on their choices and behaviour, including online.

RSE is a statutory requirement for secondary schools in England and is delivered in accordance with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the statutory RSHE guidance in force from 1 September 2026 and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The school delivers RSE principally through PSHE, with relevant content reinforced through Science, Computing, Religious Education and the wider curriculum. Statutory Health Education is addressed through the wider PSHE curriculum and the related policies identified at the end of this policy.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of RSE at Stratford Girls' Grammar School is to build on students' primary Relationships Education and prepare them for healthy, respectful and fulfilling relationships throughout their lives. Students will develop an understanding of friendships, families, intimate and committed relationships, and the importance of mutual respect, trust, honesty, kindness and effective communication.

RSE will enable students to make informed decisions about relationships, sexual health and wellbeing; understand consent, personal boundaries, bodily autonomy and relevant law; recognise unhealthy, coercive, exploitative or abusive behaviour; manage pressure and risk; and know how and where to seek support.

Teaching will be inclusive, age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It will take account of students' religious and cultural backgrounds, experiences and needs; comply with the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty; and include reasonable adjustments in accordance with the SEND Code of Practice. Students will be taught the relevant facts and law concerning sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment in a factual and balanced way that does not present contested views as established fact or reinforce harmful stereotypes.

This policy is published on the school website and has been developed in consultation with parents/carers, students, staff and governors, as appropriate. The school will consult parents/carers when it is materially revised.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governors

The governing body will:

- Approve the policy and ensure that it remains compliant with statutory requirements and is published on the school website.

- Provide strategic oversight of RSE as part of the school's safeguarding and preventative curriculum.
- Ensure that RSE is well led, appropriately resourced and delivered by suitably trained staff.
- Monitor the effectiveness, inclusivity and accessibility of provision through reports from school leaders and feedback from students, parents/carers and staff.

Headteacher

The Headteacher will retain overall accountability for implementing this policy and delegate operational responsibility for curriculum planning, sequencing, resources, staff guidance, quality assurance, monitoring and evaluation to the Head of PSHE. The designated safeguarding leader will oversee this delegated work and report to the governing body.

Head of PSHE

The Head of PSHE will:

- Plan and sequence the RSE curriculum; ensure that content is age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, inclusive and accessible; and support staff through guidance, training and appropriate resources.
- Coordinate delivery across PSHE and relevant curriculum areas, avoiding unnecessary duplication with Health Education, drug and alcohol education, safeguarding education, Science, Computing and Religious Education.
- Review materials and external provision; monitor teaching and student outcomes; and seek feedback from students, parents/carers and staff.
- Report on the quality and effectiveness of provision to the designated senior leader.

Parents and Carers

The school recognises parents/carers as the first educators of their children and works in partnership with them. Parents/carers will receive timely information about curriculum content and delivery, have opportunities to ask questions and share views, and be supported to continue age-appropriate discussion at home.

Parents/carers may request to see all materials used to teach RSE, including materials from external providers. The school will provide access within a reasonable timeframe, subject only to lawful restrictions such as the protection of personal data; it will not rely on commercial confidentiality or copyright as a reason to withhold sight of teaching materials.

Parents/carers may request withdrawal from some or all sex education taught as part of RSE, other than the biological aspects of human growth and reproduction taught within National Curriculum Science. They may not withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education. The Headteacher will discuss each request and explain the educational benefits and possible implications before a decision is made.

Once a student is three terms away from their 16th birthday, the school will provide the sex education from which they have been withdrawn if the student requests it. The parental withdrawal remains effective unless and until the student makes that request.

Confidentiality and safeguarding

Students will be told that staff cannot promise confidentiality where information suggests that a student or another person may be at risk of harm. Staff will follow the school's safeguarding and child protection procedures, record and report concerns promptly to the DSL or deputy DSL and encourage students to seek support from a trusted adult.

RSE forms part of the school's preventative safeguarding curriculum by helping students recognise harm within and outside the home, including child-on-child abuse, extra-familial harm, relationship abuse and exploitation, and understand how to seek help. Any concern or disclosure will be managed under the school's safeguarding procedures, and the needs and safety of the victim, the alleged perpetrator and other affected children will be considered.

Working with external agencies

Stratford Girls' Grammar School may use external visitors to support delivery of aspects of RSE. External contributors can enhance the curriculum through specialist knowledge, expertise and different ways of engaging students; however, the school retains overall responsibility for planning, delivery and quality assurance.

The school will agree the purpose of the session in advance and review the content, resources and delivery methods to ensure that they support the planned curriculum and are accurate, age-appropriate, inclusive, evidence-informed and accessible, including for students with SEND.

External providers must follow the school's equality, safeguarding, confidentiality and reporting requirements. A member of school staff will remain present and responsible for behaviour, safeguarding and student support.

Providers must permit the school to share all materials used or proposed for use with parents/carers. The school will not accept confidentiality or copyright restrictions that prevent parents/carers from seeing those materials.

The school will evaluate external provision after delivery against the agreed curriculum objectives, the suitability and accessibility of the content, student and staff feedback, and any safeguarding, equality or wellbeing issues arising.

Topics to be covered

The curriculum is sequenced to build on primary Relationships Education and develop knowledge and skills progressively through secondary school. Topics are taught in an age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate way, with sensitivity to students' religious and cultural backgrounds and with reasonable adjustments for SEND. Relevant legal provisions are taught alongside each topic so that students understand their rights, responsibilities and sources of support.

Families

Students learn about:

- The characteristics and benefits of healthy, committed and supportive relationships, including their contribution to wellbeing, stability and the raising of children where relevant.
- Different family structures and relationships, recognising that families may take many forms and that caring, supportive relationships are important for children's wellbeing and development.

- Marriage, civil partnerships and other committed relationships, including their legal status, rights and responsibilities; that marriage and civil partnership must be entered into freely and willingly; that marriage and civil partnership provide legal rights and protections not acquired simply through cohabitation; that so-called common-law marriage has no legal status; and that forced marriage and marriage under the age of 18 are illegal.
- The roles and responsibilities of parents and carers, the characteristics of positive parenting, the importance of a safe, stable and nurturing environment, the significance of the early years for a child's development, and how families and relationships may change through birth, death, separation and new relationships.

Respectful relationships and friendships

Students learn about:

- The characteristics of healthy relationships and friendships, including online, sexual and non-sexual relationships:
- Consent, privacy, personal boundaries and bodily autonomy, including how consent is sought, given, refused and withdrawn, taught progressively throughout secondary education. Students will understand that ethical behaviour in relationships involves more than consent and also requires kindness, care, attention to the other person's needs and vulnerabilities, and awareness of power imbalances.
- Trust, honesty, kindness, empathy, respect, generosity and effective communication.
- Managing disagreement and conflict constructively, reconciliation where appropriate, and ending relationships respectfully and safely.
- Practical strategies for establishing, maintaining and strengthening positive relationships, including developing self-esteem, independence, interests and supportive friendship groups; communicating respectfully; managing conflict and relationship endings; recognising different forms of bullying, including online bullying; understanding their impact; and knowing the responsibilities of bystanders to report concerns and seek help.

Characteristics of unhealthy relationships and friendships:

- How to judge whether a person, relationship or online interaction is trustworthy and safe.
- How to recognise unhealthy, exploitative, coercive, controlling, manipulative or abusive behaviour.
- How to recognise and respond to sexual harassment, sexual violence, harmful sexual behaviour and other forms of child-on-child abuse, and why these behaviours are always unacceptable.
- How stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination can cause harm and contribute to unhealthy attitudes and behaviour.
- How misogyny, sexism and harmful stereotypes can influence attitudes, relationships and behaviour, including through pornography, social media, online influencers and online subcultures that promote sexual entitlement, hostility or prejudice; and how to question and challenge these messages safely.
- Risks associated with online relationships, peer pressure, coercion, manipulation and harmful content, and how and where to seek advice, support and protection.

- Legal rights and responsibilities relating to equality, consent and protection from discrimination, particularly under the Equality Act 2010.

Online and media safety and harm

Students are taught:

- The same standards of behaviour, respect and responsibility apply online as offline.
- How information, data and digital content are generated, collected, shared, stored and used, and how to protect personal information and privacy.
- How to evaluate online information and recognise misinformation, disinformation and manipulated content.
- How to manage an online presence responsibly, respect digital consent and understand the consequences of sharing personal or intimate content.
- The impact of harmful online content, including material promoting discrimination, violence, exploitation, unhealthy relationships or harmful attitudes.
- That sexually explicit material, including pornography, presents a distorted and unrealistic picture of sexual relationships, consent, intimacy and body image and may affect attitudes and behaviour.
- Risks associated with grooming, coercion, manipulation and abuse online, including fake accounts, online scams, sextortion, artificial intelligence, deepfakes, image manipulation, image-based abuse and AI chatbots that may create false intimacy or provide harmful advice; how to recognise these risks; and how to seek support without fear of blame.
- How to respond safely to AI-generated, manipulated or intimate images, report concerns and seek support.
- That creating, possessing, viewing or sharing indecent or sexual images of a person under 18 is illegal and may have serious criminal and safeguarding consequences, including where the image is self-generated, created using artificial intelligence or initially shared with consent; that sharing intimate images of an adult without consent may also be a criminal offence; and that students should seek help promptly and will be supported rather than blamed when an image of them has been shared.

Being safe

Students are taught:

- The law relating to age of consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, controlling behaviour, harassment, stalking, rape, domestic abuse and other forms of violence and abuse, including that consent must be freely given, can never be assumed and can be withdrawn at any time.
- How power imbalances, pressure and manipulation can affect relationships, consent and decision-making, and how to respond safely to harmful behaviour.
- The law and safeguarding issues relating to forced marriage, honour-based abuse, female genital mutilation and other harmful practices; the physical and psychological harm they may cause; the relevant duties to protect children; and how to access support and protection.
- That certain assault-related behaviours can cause serious injury or death, even where there is no visible injury, and that students should seek immediate help if they experience or witness such behaviour.

- How and where to seek advice and safeguarding help for themselves or others, within school and from external agencies.

Intimate and sexual relationships, sexual health

Students are taught:

- The characteristics of healthy intimate relationships, including mutual respect, equality, trust, honesty, consent, effective communication, shared values and personal responsibility.
- How relationship choices can affect physical health, emotional wellbeing, mental health, sexual health and reproductive health.
- Strategies for recognising and managing peer pressure, coercion and manipulation, resisting pressure and avoiding pressuring others.
- That individuals have a choice about whether and when to enter intimate relationships; that many young people wait until they are older; that relationships can be fulfilling without physical intimacy; and that any intimate relationship should be based on readiness, mutual respect, care, communication and freely given consent.
- Reproductive health, including fertility, pregnancy, miscarriage, menopause and the possible impact of lifestyle choices.
- How alcohol, drugs and other factors may impair judgement and increase vulnerability to unsafe sexual behaviour.
- Methods of contraception, including effectiveness, advantages and limitations, and how to obtain advice and support.
- Pregnancy and the options following pregnancy, including parenting, adoption and abortion, with information about further advice and support.
- Sexually transmitted infections, including HIV: how they are transmitted; how risk can be reduced through appropriate prevention; the importance of testing and treatment; the impact of stigma; and how to identify and use medically accurate sources of information, advice and support.
- How to access confidential sexual and reproductive health services, advice and treatment.

Monitoring, evaluation and review

The Head of PSHE will monitor curriculum coverage, the quality of teaching, accessibility, student understanding and the effectiveness of resources and external provision. Evaluation will draw on curriculum reviews, lesson visits or other quality-assurance activity, staff and student feedback, parent/carer feedback where appropriate, and any relevant safeguarding or wellbeing information. Findings will inform curriculum development, staff training and reports to the designated senior leader and governing body.

The governing body will review this policy at the interval stated in the policy information table, or sooner if statutory guidance, legislation, safeguarding requirements or the needs of the school change. Staff, student and parent/carer views will be considered when material changes are proposed.

Related Health Education policies

Further detail about the school's Health Education provision is contained in the following policies:

- PSHE policy
- Behaviour Policy

- Drugs Policy
- Whole school approach to well-being
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development Policy
- Equality Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- First Aid Policy