
Belfairs Academy



Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy

September 2026

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Applicable to	Staff, Students and Parents
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Objectives

The objectives of relationships and sex education (RSE) at Belfairs Academy are to:

- To provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- To prepare students for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- To help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity.
- To create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- To deliver the sex and relationships education programme within a moral framework.
- To teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.
- 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 combat exploitation and challenge sexism.
- To facilitate, as may be necessary, students' access to further information, help and advice.
- To ensure that students are given valid and useful information on contraception.

The RSE curriculum will help students at our academy to respect themselves and others, as well as to move with confidence through adolescence into adulthood.

Statutory Requirement

At Belfairs Academy, we take seriously our duty to provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE as set out in this policy we meet all our statutory obligations and our legal duties set out in:

- Section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).
- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (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

Curriculum

RSE within the academy is seen as an integral part of the curriculum, which is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

The Academy has developed the curriculum in consultation with parents and carers, students and staff, and considering the age, developmental stage, needs (such as cultural and religious needs) and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

Facts are presented in an objective and sensitive manner and are set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law on sexual behaviour. Throughout, our students are encouraged to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood. Due cognisance is also paid to the changing nature of family units and gender roles both within the family and society.

Every effort is made to provide a trusting and enabling environment in which sensitive issues can be explored without embarrassment.

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

Delivery

The RSHE curriculum will help students develop the skills and understanding they need to live confident, healthy and independent lives. It will play an important role, alongside other aspects of the curriculum and academy life, in helping students to deal with difficult moral and social questions. The National Healthy Academics Standard will provide a useful and supportive framework for delivering relationship and sex education. Effective delivery of sex education is embedded in the success criteria of the standard. Outside agencies (recommended by Southend Healthy Schools) support the delivery of the RSHE curriculum through workshops/drama productions etc.

Our curriculum delivery has been developed in line with the DfE statutory guidance for RSHE from September 2026.

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).

The academy will make sure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size.
- The required content is communicated to students clearly, in a carefully sequenced way and within a planned scheme of work.
- Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for students to embed new knowledge, so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, including:

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

RSE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school 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.

Teachers will make sure that students 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 focus on students of all gender identities and expressions, and activities will be planned to make sure all are actively involved.

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

- Diagrams
- Videos
- Books
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will make sure that all students' 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 age of the students.

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.

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

It is important for our students to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help students 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.
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Students 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 our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our students, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner.

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 (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

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

Specific classroom arrangements: (e.g. single sex, mixed)

Classroom arrangements are flexible. Generally classes are taught in mixed ability and mixed gender groups; however, on occasions it may be appropriate to deliver a unit in a single sex environment.

Inclusivity

The Academy will ensure that students will not be withdrawn from any RSHE lessons for learning support. Opportunities will be given for any student who may be absent from any aspect of the RSE modules to be given relevant information.

We 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
 - ✓ Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

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

Use of resources

All learning schemes, lesson plans and resources are available within both the RSHE and Science departments, as well as to others on request.

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 and maturity of the 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 won't provoke distress.

Who will teach it:

RSHE will be taught by staff from the Humanities Department, with appropriate training and guidance from specialist staff and professional bodies, including but not limited to the PSHE Association, Statutory Framework, and Local Authority Provisions.

Use of external organisations and materials

The Academy will make sure that an agency and any materials used are accurate, age and stage appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

We 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
 - ✓ The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - ✓ The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - ✓ The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - ✓ 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'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 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.

- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers.
- Share all external materials with parents and carers.

We **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 Monitoring and Evaluation.

Procedures for reviewing effectiveness of programme

The Subject Leader for Religious Education will monitor and evaluate the RSHE programme ensuring that:

- National guidance is followed
- Parents and carers are involved
- Staff are given appropriate training and support
- Students' views are listened to

This monitoring will be supported by the Subject Leader for Humanities and the Academy Senior Leadership Team.

Student and staff feedback is monitored by the Subject Leader for Religious Education.

Organisation of Sex Education Programme

Who will teach it:

RSHE will be taught by staff from the Humanities Department.

Training provision:

Training is provided when required by:

- The academy nurse (by appointment)
- Essex & Southend Healthy Academics Partnership
- Local Authority

Methodology and approach including explicitness and handling of controversial topics:

- Ground rules are established at the start of any sensitive module.
- Controversial issues are dealt with sensitively in line with other academy policies.

Procedures for reviewing effectiveness of programme

Student and staff feedback is monitored by the Subject Leader for Values.

Contraceptive advice, information and referrals of under 16s to health services (individually and in the classroom)

Students are made aware of where they may obtain contraceptive advice. Appointments can be made for students at the academy with a nurse by request through our wellbeing team.

Confidentiality (individually and in the classroom)

All staff adhere to the confidentiality policies of the academy.

Parents' right to withdraw

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

Requests for withdrawal should be put into writing, addressed to the Head of School.

A copy of any withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Head of School will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a student's specific vulnerability, the Head of School can refuse a request to withdraw the student from sex education.

Alternative schoolwork will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Policy Review and Consultation

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Subject Leader for RSE and the Head of School.

Parents will be consulted on the policy annually.

Appendix 1 - RSHE at Belfairs Academy

What do we study in Year 7? Dealing with Change Physical & Mental Health Looking after our bodies Puberty & Body Changes First Aid Managing Emotions & Resilience Friendships & Positive Relationships Bullying & Online Safety Consent & Personal Boundaries Sexual behaviours Gangs FGM Managing Money & Financial Literacy Exploring career roles and pathways Communication Rights, Responsibilities & the Law Media Literacy & Fake News		What do we study in Year 8? Attitudes towards mental health Promoting emotional health Health/unhealthy coping strategies Caffeine and its impact Smoking and vaping and their impact Alcohol and its impact Prejudice and discrimination and how to tackle it Disability discrimination Challenging racism Challenging sexism Sexual diversity Contraception and what it's for Sexting, consent and the law Effective communication Work patterns and rights Exploring stereotypes and workplace encounters Social Media, Wellbeing, and Your Digital Footprint Online stress and FOMO E-safety	
What do we study in year 9? How to be assertive The law around drug misuse Gang exploitation What is 'happiness' and how do we attain it? (RE crossover) What is a healthy relationship? What makes someone a 'good parent'? Contraception STIs The impact of pornography Atheism and religious world perspectives (RE cross over) Employability skills Labour market information Financial literacy and budgeting	What do we study in year 10? Mental Health and stigma How to safeguard our mental health War and peace (RE cross over) How to prevent extremism Consent Sexual expectations and myths Unwanted pregnancy choices (some RE) Miscarriage Rights in the workplace Professional conduct at work Goals and future options Evil and suffering and the Holocaust (RE crossover) Vaccinations Avoiding risky behaviours Risks of binge drinking Addiction		What do we study in year 11? Post 16 applications (college or sixth form?) Career adaptability Labour market awareness and career goals British Values – respect for the law and tolerance (RE crossover) Assertive communication Relationship challenges and break ups – coping strategies Grief and bereavement How relationships change Cancer and how to check for it Cancer risk factors Blood and organ donation and medical ethics (RE cross over)
What do we study in year 12? Managing intimate relationships Maintaining old and developing new relationships Ending and improving relationships Deepening your understanding of consent Consent - Attuning to our needs and those of others" Sexual and reproductive rights Online wellbeing - Bias and extremism Media influence - Identities and relationships Wellbeing and mental health Alcohol and drug misuse Volunteering Making healthy choices and preventing illness Personal safety - Travelling in the UK and abroad First aid Making the most of the money we have How do people start their own business or charity?" Careers in a global economy"		What do we study in year 13? What next? Thinking about the future and leaving home Staying healthy Exploring discrimination and inclusion Norms, values and behaviour Appreciating diversity Exploring privilege Connecting with body and emotions mindfully Looking After Your Body - Healthy food and exercise Sexual Health Parenthood and Fertility - Discussing contraception and accessing emergency contraception Consent Earning respect, avoiding danger: pressure on young people to join gangs How to budget and save our money What should I expect when I go to work? Finding work, preparing applications and confident interviewing	