



Shoeburyness High School
a member of
Southend East Community Academy Trust

**Relationships, Sex & Health
Education Policy**

'Building Strong Partnerships, Building Strong Community,
Building Strong Schools'

Status:	Statutory (September 2026)
Updated:	April 2026
Next Review date:	April 2027
Reviewed and monitored by:	Mrs L Fanning (Personal Development)
Lead Member of Staff:	Mr J Banks
Signed by Chair of the Academy Committee:	<i>K Howard</i>



1. Aims

Shoeburyness High School believes that Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is an educational entitlement of all students and an integral part of emergence into adulthood.

“Children and young people need knowledge and skills that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote their moral, social, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive characteristics including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness. Effective teaching will support prevention of harms by helping young people understand and identify when things are not right.” (DfE Statutory Guidance July 2025).

2. Statutory Requirements

As a secondary school we must provide RSHE to all students, as set out in legislation.¹ The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. At Shoeburyness High School we teach RSHE as set out in this policy. This reflects the DfE Statutory Guidance (July 2025), including statutory changes effective as of September 2026.

3. Policy Development

The aim of this policy is to clearly communicate to staff, parents, visitors, and students the way sexual health and relationships education will be delivered in this school. The Academy Committee, in consultation with parents, will develop policies which meet statutory requirements, reflect the parents' wishes and the community they serve.

4. Definition

RSHE is about the emotional, social, and cultural development of students, and involves learning about healthy respectful relationships, sexual health, sexuality and healthy lifestyles, whilst promoting diversity and equality and challenging harmful attitudes including sexism and misogyny. We actively support students to stay safe in

their local communities, and outline the dangers associated with AI and online risks. RSHE at SHS involves a combination of sharing legal information and exploring issues and values and is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

5. Curriculum

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students, and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek inaccurate answers online, or from peers. Parents may view our RSHE materials upon request.

6. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. This focuses on the law around relationships and broader safeguarding issues. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other factors are considered in Religious Education (RE). The curriculum is age-appropriate and responsive to student needs across the year groups at SHS; to cover respectful relationships of all kinds including:

Families

Pupils are taught about:

- different types of committed, stable relationships and how they contribute to human happiness.
- what marriage is, including the legal status of marriage and other long-term relationships.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be entered into freely, highlighting that forced marriage is illegal.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to the raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to recognise unsafe and unhealthy relationships, and seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed.

Respectful Relationships

Pupils are taught about:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships to cover; trust, respect, honesty, kindness, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict.
- how stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, or disability, can cause damage (how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage misogyny and harmful ideologies).
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact and the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying, including where to seek help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships is criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are both unacceptable and criminal.
- the legal rights regarding equality (with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and Social Media

Pupils are taught about:

- the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, their rights and responsibilities online, including that behavioural expectations apply in all contexts.
- about online risks related to online gambling and debt.
- the law around providing personal material to others and sharing or sending on such material, including where to get support to report and manage issues online.
- an awareness of AI, deepfakes and false information.
- the impact of sexually explicit material e.g., pornography presenting a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, which can damage the way people see and behave in sexual relationships.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence, which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, shared and used online, including data privacy and awareness of scams.

Being Safe

Pupils are taught about:

- the concepts of; and laws relating to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, including how these can affect relationships.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts).
- how to resolve conflict when relationships become difficult or need to end.
- the dangers of knife crime and the law around serious violence.

Intimate and Sexual Relationships (including sexual health)

Pupils are taught about:

- how to recognise the characteristics of positive healthy intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests, sex, and friendship.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices made around sex and relationships, both positively and negatively, e.g., emotional, mental, sexual, and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women, including the menopause.
- the strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- the facts about the full range of contraception, efficacy, and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- the choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safe sex (condom use) and the importance of testing.
- how the use of alcohol and drugs is linked to risky sexual behaviour in young adults.
- how to seek advice, including where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, without stigmatisation of children based on any differences in home circumstances (single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents), along with reflecting that some children may have a different structure of support (for example: looked after children or young carers).

Mental Well-Being

Pupils are taught about:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns and raise awareness of risks around suicide.
- common types of mental ill health and contributors (e.g., anxiety, depression, bereavement and loneliness).
- how to critically evaluate when something they are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' health, e.g., substance misuse.
- the benefits and importance of a good diet, physical exercise, time outdoors, and good sleep and hygiene routines. Alongside the advantages of engaging in community activities for mental wellbeing and happiness.

Physical Health and Fitness

Pupils are taught about:

- what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a good weight and the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardio-vascular ill-health.
- how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancers.
- about the science relating to blood, organ, and stem cell donation.

Substance Misuse

- the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use and associations with serious mental health conditions.
- the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.
- the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and addiction.
- awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed, but still present serious health risks.

- the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco and vaping (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.

Health, Prevention and First Aid

Pupils are taught about:

- puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- personal hygiene, germs including bacteria and viruses and how they are spread. The use of antibiotics in the treatment and prevention of infection.
- dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist.
- (Years 10 & 11) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening.
- the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR and call emergency services.
- the purpose and use of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 The Academy Committee

The Academy Committee will approve the RSHE policy and hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

7.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSHE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from components of RSHE.

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE.
- Undertaking relevant training in safeguarding, sensitive topics and emerging risks.
- Monitoring student progress and responding to the needs of students.
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish for them to be withdrawn from components of RSHE.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

7.4 Students

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

8. Parents' Right to Withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the components of sex education within RSHE up to and until three 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 1 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. A senior member of staff will discuss the request with parents and take the appropriate action.

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

9. Monitoring Arrangements

The content of RSHE lessons is reviewed annually within the Social Sciences department to ensure all relevant and statutory areas of the policy are included. The Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) Policy will be made available to all parents when their child enters the school, via the school website.

This policy will be reviewed and updated annually by the Academy Committee and Assistant Headteacher responsible for Personal Development.

Links to other Policies and Documents:

Equality Diversity & Inclusion Policy

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Behaviour Policy

