Castle View School

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Relationship and Sex Education Policy

This Policy was approved by the Governing Body in:	July 2026
This Policy will be reviewed in:	September 2027
This policy will be reviewed by:	Full Governing Body

Statement of intent

Relationship and Sex Education (RSE), previously called Sex and Relationship Education, focuses on the emotional social and cultural development of students and involves learning about healthy relationships and the dangers of unhealthy relationships. Students will also learn about sexuality and gender identification, sexual, emotional and mental health, healthy lifestyles, diversity and equality. It includes a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values, and it is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

The Castle View School believes that to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Pupils need to be able to put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. Our support in these areas will help young people develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help and to know where to access support.

Our curriculum is also designed to explicitly cover all elements of the statutory Relationships and Sex education guidance, creating a supportive culture where students feel able to ask questions.

Staff are supported through training, with resources prepared by specialist staff or sourced through institutions with relevant specialisms.

Legal Requirements

Our RSE programme meets the legal requirements outlined in the following: -

- The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2026; Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 Keeping children safe in education 2026 (comes into force from 1 September 2026)
- Duty to promote well-being (Children act 2004)
- Duty to prepare children for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life (Education Act 2006)
- Ensure pupils learn about the nature of marriage and its importance for family life and bringing up of children (Learning and Skills Act 2006)
- Protect pupils from unsuitable teaching and materials (Learning and Skills Act 2006)
- Teach statutory RSE elements in the Science National Curriculum.
- Meet the schools safeguarding obligations.
- Make the policy available to pupils and parents (Education Act 1996).
- Right of parental withdrawal from the sex education part of RSE
- Improve support for looked after children as per the Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Prevent discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different groups (Equality Act 2010).
- Our school's core principles are in line with the Equality Act. This ensures that everything we do is underpinned by this.

Process of developing the policy

Our policy has been developed in response to the statutory Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education guidance produced by the DFE. Considerable research has been done in order to develop this policy. It has been written by the lead of Personal Development who has consulted with the PSHE association and other local schools. There has also been consultation with both teaching and non-teaching staff within the school to ensure that everyone can have a say in what they deem appropriate for our pupils' needs. We consider the policy to be a working policy as we endeavour to change it in order to reflect changes in Government initiatives and the needs of our pupils, the review process will take into account the views of all stakeholders, including parents.

Aims and Objectives of our Relationship and Sex Education Programme (RSE).

There are three main elements: -

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, marriage and what a healthy relationship looks like
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding of moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision making.
- Know where to ask for help or support when something doesn't feel healthy.

Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of differences and with the absence of prejudice.
- Developing an appreciation of choices made.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- Agencies for support.

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages.
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships.
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services.

Equal Opportunities

Within this framework we are ensuring that the following equal opportunities are clear to our pupils;

- We expect everyone to show respect for other people. We expect people to treat everyone as having the right to human dignity.
- We will not accept the use of language that abuses, degrades or demeans another person's race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion or belief, ability, appearance, age or disabilities. We all have the right to self-esteem.
- We will not tolerate the promotion of ideas or materials that degrade or exploit other people's race, gender, sexual orientation, regional or belief, ability, appearance, age or disabilities. We all have the right to self-respect.
- We will ensure that lessons are accessible for SEND students; Key vocabulary will be taught explicitly, knowledge will be taught by trained teachers and will be revisited through retrieval quizzes. The curriculum has been designed so that key learning can be built upon each year, and teachers are able to adapt the teaching of each topic to meet their classes' needs.

Key roles and Responsibilities.

- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for the implementation of Castle View Schools RSE policy.
- The Governing Body has overall responsibility for ensuring that the RSE policy, as written does not discriminate, including but not limited to ethnicity/national origin, culture, religion, gender, disability or sexual orientation.

- The Governing Body has an overall responsibility for reviewing the RSE policy annually.
- The Headteacher has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy as outlined in the school's complaints policy.
- The Headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the RSE policy.
- The lead of PSHE is responsible for liaising with other staff and professional agencies to devise a suitable programme to ensure a comprehensive RSE education that achieves the aims laid out in this policy.
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Confidentiality and safeguarding

The RSE programme is monitored and evaluated in line with the school's self-evaluation programme. In addition, the policy and programme is monitored and evaluated at regular intervals in partnership with pupils, staff, parents, and governors, to ensure the programme is appropriately set for the age and maturity of the pupils as well as reflecting their views and responding to issues raised.

Teachers and all those who contribute to RSE are expected to work within the principles outlined in this policy and in line with current legislation.

Young people need to develop their confidence in talking, listening and thinking about relationships and sex, so the teaching of the RSE programme should:

- Set ground rules to create a safe environment for all to feel included in discussions;
- De-personalise discussions;
- Establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate discussion points;
- Recognise when a pupil may need further support and arrange for this support to be made available;
- Teachers should be sensitive to students' questions about their own sexuality or sexual orientation. Teachers should not allow homophobic attitudes to go unchallenged.
- Staff teaching RSE need to be clear on the boundaries of their legal and professional roles and responsibilities. Absolute confidentiality cannot be offered or guaranteed.
- Students need to know that teachers or other adults cannot offer complete confidentiality but also be reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and supported as appropriate – students' best interests will be maintained.
- If staff have any suspicion of suspected abuse, or they have reason to believe the child is at risk of abuse, the school's safeguarding procedures must be followed, and the designated safeguarding officer must be informed.
- Health professionals are bound by their professional code of conduct with individual pupils, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

If a member of staff learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having, or contemplating having, sexual intercourse then:

- Staff should attempt to persuade the young person to talk to their parent or carer
- Any child protection issues should be addressed
- Ensure the young person has been adequately counselled and informed about contraception by passing on details to the named senior member of staff.
- It is only in the most exceptional circumstances that schools should be in the position of having to handle information without parental knowledge.
- Staff should be aware that some pupils with special needs may need more explicit teaching on some aspects of sex education.
- All staff must be made aware of the school's Sex and Relationship Education Policy via the induction programme given to all new teaching staff. It is the responsibility of all staff to take a pro-active approach to sex and relationship education and to tackle/deal with issues as and when they arise. If staff feel unsure or anxious at any stage, they must discuss their concerns with a senior member of staff.

Programme of Study: -

RSE will be taught across the curriculum through a number of subjects (for example Science and PE), within assemblies and tutor times. We also dedicate 1 hour a week for Key Stage 3 and one hour a fortnight for Key Stage 4 during which they will cover a range of topics (see table on next page). Relationship and Sex Education is taught explicitly in Autumn 2 and Summer 1 of the academic year, with core themes also being touched upon throughout other topics, allowing for a deeper understanding. All lessons are planned in an age-appropriate way and staff are given training opportunities. The Personal Development curriculum is taught by a team of specialised and supported teachers, ensuring that the diverse range of topics are covered in supportive and positive learning environments. The curriculum has been consulted with parents.

2025-2026 An overview of our curriculum can be found using the link below.

Castle View School - Personal Development - PSHE RSE

Teaching methods and learning style

A range of teaching and learning styles will be used to teach RSE:

- A selected core group of qualified teaching staff deliver RSE within the PSHE curriculum.
- The above staff receive additional and tailored CPD to support in the curriculum delivery.
- The curriculum is taught through timetabled lessons – 2 hours a fortnight for KS3 and 1 hour a fortnight for KS4. The assembly and tutor time programme compliments the delivery.
- Teaching will be pupil led and there will be an emphasis on active learning techniques such as discussion and debate.
- Pupils will learn research and critical thinking techniques while having the opportunity to engage in investigations and problem-solving activities.
- All lessons are adapted to suit the needs of the learners, ensuring that they are accessible for all including SEND.
- We will use visiting speakers, such as health workers, the St John's Ambulance to support with First Aid and the police, to broaden the curriculum and share their real-life experiences.
- There is also an element of RSE in pastoral care, tutor time and in whole school assembly plans.

Assessment

With PSHE no formal assessment will take place. However, students' knowledge and understanding is assessed through formative assessment via in class assessment, question and answer sessions, discussion groups, online surveys and our end of unit quizzes and reflections.

Understanding within other subject areas is in line within individual departmental assessment policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The PHSE lead and team responsible for the delivery of PHSE/RSE will be accountable for the monitoring and evaluation of the PHSE/RSE programme. This will be done through consultation with staff, parents and pupils alongside learning walks which occur as part of school policy. Pupils and staff will complete reviews at end of modules and staff will discuss and review the programme of study at relevant meetings. Relevant changes and improvements will be made to the programme on an ongoing and regular basis.

How we work with Parents/Carers

We are aware that some parents find it hard to cope with their children's personal development and are happy for the school to take the initiative. We will take every opportunity to involve and inform parents and carers:

- By making our commitment clear in the Parent Guide provided to parents.

- By providing opportunities to take part in parent feedback questionnaires.
- The curriculum will be shared with parents on our school website and a half termly newsletter is send for parents to see what they are learning and the upcoming topics as well.
- Booklets are also sent home with students at the end of each unit.
- Parental feedback forms are on school website year-round for any feedback and questions as well; as well as a link reminder shared at various points in the year through our newsletters.

Right to withdraw

Under DFE guidance, parent(s)/carer(s) have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/ nonscience elements of sex education up until and three terms before their child is aged 16. After this point, if the young person wishes to receive sex education the legislation gives them the right to choose to attend appropriate lessons.

If the parent(s)/carer(s) wish to exercise their right to withdraw their child from said lessons prior to three terms before being 16, a request should be put in writing addressed to the Headteacher. The request will be discussed with parent(s)/carer(s) and upon agreeing the request, pastoral and other staff will ensure that the student is appropriately placed to be able to study outside of the lesson for the lessons where sex education is taking place. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawing from sex education following this process.

Additional Support (external agencies/websites)

- Guidance from the 20 DFE Relationships Education Document
- PSHE Association Support
- Essex Child end Wellbeing Service
- Research within the legal requirements section

Individual difficulties in these areas are supported with strategies to help children/young people, and their families deal with issues arising by the pastoral system, which is a group of staff known as the wellbeing interventions team, which includes each year group's pastoral manager, the SEN team and a dedicated wellbeing team including specialist support for mental health issues. This includes a curriculum support unit known as the oasis and in school counselling and specialist home school liaison where school refusal becomes an issue. There is also a specialist interventions team within SEN who address these issues from the needs of children with disabilities.

Other related policies.

Child protection and safeguarding policy
Anti-bullying policy
Behaviour and rewards policy
E-safety policy
Collective worship policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed at a minimum yearly. This is in line with government guidance and changes; all stakeholders will be consulted regarding changes.

F.A.Qs For Parents

Q: Will my child's school have to consult with me before teaching these subjects?

A: Schools will be required to consult with parents when developing and reviewing their policies for Relationships Education and RSE, which will inform schools' decisions on when and how certain content is covered. Effective consultation gives the space and time for parents to input, ask questions, share concerns and for the school to decide the way forward. Schools will listen to parents' views and then make a reasonable decision as to how they wish to proceed. What is taught, and how, is ultimately a decision for the school and consultation does not provide a parental veto on curriculum content. A school's policies for these subjects must be published online and must be available to any individual free of charge. Schools should also ensure that, when they consult parents, they provide examples of the resources they plan to use, for example the books they will use in lessons.

Q: Does the new Relationships Education and RSE curriculum take account of my faith?

A: The subjects are designed to help children from all backgrounds build positive and safe relationships, and to thrive in modern Britain. In all schools, when teaching these subjects, the religious background of pupils must be taken into account when planning teaching, so that topics are appropriately handled. Schools with a religious character can build on the core content by reflecting their beliefs in their teaching.
In developing these subjects, we have worked with a number of representative bodies and faith organisations, representing all the major faith groups in England. Several faith organisations produce teaching materials that schools can choose to use.

Q: Do I have a right to withdraw my child from Relationships and Sex Education?

A: Parents will have a right to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should
be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.
There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

Q: Has the government listened to the views of my community in introducing these subjects?

A: A thorough engagement process, involving a public call for evidence and discussions with over 90 organisations, as well as the public consultation on the draft regulations and
guidance, has informed the key decisions on these subjects. The consultation received over 11,000 responses from teachers, schools, expert organisations, young people and parents – these responses have helped finalise the statutory guidance as well as the regulations that have been laid in Parliament.

Q: Will these subjects promote LGBT relationships?

A: No, these subjects don't 'promote' anything, they educate. Pupils should be taught about the society in which they are growing up. These subjects are designed to foster respect for others and for difference and educate pupils about healthy relationships. RSE should meet the needs of all pupils, whatever their developing sexuality or identity – this should include age-appropriate teaching about different types of relationships in the context of the law.
Pupils should receive teaching on LGBT relationships during their school years - we expect secondary schools to include LGBT content. Primary schools are enabled and encouraged to cover LGBT content if they consider it age appropriate to do so, but there is no specific requirement for this. This would be delivered, for example, through teaching about different types of family, including those with same sex parents.

Q: Will teachers receive training before delivering these subjects?

A: The department is committed to supporting schools to deliver these subjects to a high standard. We know that training is a priority for teachers, and we will be consulting with teachers, trade unions and other key stakeholders over the coming months on how we structure the training.