



***Dynamic, empowered learners who thrive and lead in
their communities: locally, nationally and globally***

RELATIONSHIPS EDUCATION AND HEALTH EDUCATION TEMPLATE POLICY

THIS POLICY WAS APPROVED:	TERM YEAR
POLICY VERSION:	1
THIS POLICY WILL BE REVIEWED:	TERM YEAR
MEMBER OF STAFF WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR REVIEW:	
THIS POLICY WAS CONSULTED WITH:	
THIS POLICY WAS CONSULTED WITH EXTERNAL UNIONS (HR POLICIES)	START DATE TO END DATE
THIS POLICY WAS DISTRIBUTED TO:	

Introduction

This policy sets out the school's approach to Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) in a secondary school context, ensuring compliance with statutory guidance (DfE, updated 2026) and local safeguarding data relevant to the school.

RSHE is a core part of the school's safeguarding and personal development provision. It supports pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills necessary to:

- build safe, respectful relationships
- make informed decisions
- recognise risk and harm
- maintain positive physical and mental health
- navigate online and offline environments safely

The curriculum at Stour Valley Community School, reflects a relational values, inclusive and safeguarding-led approach, recognising that pupils learn best in environments characterised by respect, belonging and emotional safety.

Definitions

- Relationships Education: Families, friendships, respectful relationships (including intimate relationships), online relationships and exploitation awareness.
- Sex Education: Teaching about sexual activity, reproduction, consent, contraception, STIs and sexual health.
- Health Education: Physical health, mental wellbeing, emotional literacy and healthy lifestyles.

These are collectively referred to as RSHE Relationships, Sex and Health Education

Statutory Requirements

Stour Valley Community School complies with the statutory requirement to deliver:

- Relationships Education (compulsory)
- Relationships and Sex Education (compulsory in secondary schools)
- Health Education (compulsory)

This policy outlines the legal framework around relationships and sex education, how the curriculum is planned, quality checked and clarification of parental rights regarding withdrawal from non-statutory sex education. Parents should be aware that our academies must uphold the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010 and not discriminate against anyone with protected characteristics.

The curriculum reflects:

- DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Health Education (2026 update)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest version)
- Education Act 1996 & 2002
- Local safeguarding data to meet the needs of the school's students.

All statutory content is taught to all pupils. Teaching is factually accurate, age-appropriate, evidence-informed, free from political and religious bias.

Roles and Responsibilities

Governing Board / Trustees

- Approve the policy
- Monitor statutory compliance and safeguarding outcomes

Anglian Learning Executive Leadership Team

- Ensure that the Headteacher has the appropriate oversight and quality assurances processes in place
- Work with headteachers to review compliance with this policy

Headteacher / Senior Leadership Team

- Ensure effective implementation and quality assurance
- Support staff training and curriculum oversight

RSHE Lead [Head of Futures]

- Design and sequence the curriculum
- Monitor delivery and impact
- Lead staff development

Teachers

- Deliver RSHE in a safe, inclusive and respectful manner
- Facilitate discussion and manage sensitive content
- Respond appropriately to questions
- All provided appropriate training and advice on content and managing questions.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- Advise on safeguarding content and contextual risks
- Manage disclosures and concerns arising from RSHE

RSHE Curriculum Intent, design, sequencing and delivery

The RSHE curriculum is planned as part of a broader personal development and wellbeing offer. It is delivered through a carefully sequenced programme across all year groups. Learning is revisited progressively so pupils build knowledge,

confidence and understanding over time. The RSHE curriculum aims to enable pupils to:

- develop respectful, consensual and healthy relationships
- understand consent, boundaries, and communication
- recognise abuse, coercion, exploitation and harmful behaviours
- identify and manage risk, including online harms
- understand sexual health, reproduction and contraception
- develop emotional literacy, resilience and wellbeing
- challenge prejudice, discrimination and harmful stereotypes
- understand diversity in relationships, identities and families

The curriculum prepares pupils for adulthood, modern society, and independent decision-making.

The curriculum is:

- Sequenced from Year 7 to Year 11 building on skills and content
- Developmentally appropriate and progressive
- Responsive to safeguarding and contextual risks using school data and regional data reports

Pupils learn about:

Relationships and Sex Education

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Consent (including active, informed consent)
- Sexual health, contraception and STIs
- Intimate relationships and sexual behaviours
- Abuse, exploitation, harassment and violence (including sexual violence and domestic abuse)
- Gender stereotypes and equality

Online Safety and Digital Relationships

- Online identity and digital footprint
- Pornography and unrealistic expectations
- Sexting, image-based abuse and legal consequences
- Online coercion and exploitation

Health Education

- Mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Physical health (including sleep, diet, substance misuse)
- Managing stress, anxiety and peer pressure

Teaching is preventative, addressing risks before harm occurs.

RSHE is delivered through:

- Timetabled Futures Lessons in year 7,8 and 9 – one hour every fortnight
- Tutor programme for all year groups – once a week for year 7, 8 and 9 and twice for year 10 and 11
- Assembly programme
- Three Enhancement Days – one per term
- Cross-curricular links

External visitors may contribute but do not replace teacher-led delivery. External providers include but are not limited to the Suffolk Constabulary, Suffolk School Nurses, other medical professionals in fields such as Cervical and Testicular cancer,

Suffolk County Council, the Eastern Education Group and the Department for Work and Pensions.

Teaching Approaches

Teaching is:

- Structured and discussion-based
- Scenario based
- Inclusive and trauma-informed
- Delivered in a safe classroom environment

Teachers will:

- Establish ground rules and set clear expectations
- Use appropriate, factual language
- Handle sensitive topics with care
- Answer questions clearly, honestly and in an age-appropriate manner within safeguarding boundaries

Where questions fall outside the curriculum, teachers will respond appropriately and may follow up with safeguarding or parental communication where necessary.

Pupil Voice and Engagement

We will involve pupils in the evaluation and development of their RSHE curriculum.

The school will:

- Gather pupil feedback regularly through student voice lessons
- Use school council and surveys
- Encourage reflection and discussion

Assessment

RSHE is not formally examined but is monitored through:

- Discussion and questioning
- Reflection activities
- Teacher assessment of understanding
- Regular knowledge checks so that the Head of Futures can run catch-up sessions for those absent or who haven't understood. Additional sessions also planned for those with EHCPs and low attendance.

Teaching is adapted where knowledge gaps are identified.

Inclusion and Equality

RSHE is inclusive and compliant with the Equality Act 2010.

Teaching:

- Reflects diverse identities, relationships and families
- Promotes respect for protected characteristics
- Challenges discrimination and prejudice
- Supports all pupils, including those with SEND

Adaptations are made to ensure accessibility and relevance for all learners.

Safeguarding and Pupil Safety

RSHE is a key part of safeguarding.

Pupils are taught to:

- recognise abuse and harmful behaviours
- understand consent and personal boundaries
- identify trusted adults and support systems
- seek help confidently

Key safeguarding themes include:

- sexual violence and harassment
- exploitation (including Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)
- peer-on-peer abuse
- online harms
- coercion and control

All staff follow safeguarding procedures. Disclosures are managed in line with school policy. For further information please see the safeguarding policy: [Safeguarding Policy - Stour Valley Community School](#)

Parental Engagement and Right to Withdraw

Stour Valley Community School works in partnership with parents and carers.

Parents are informed about:

- curriculum content and timing
- statutory requirements
- safeguarding approaches

Right to Withdraw

- No right to withdraw from Relationships or Health Education
- Parents and carers may request withdrawal from sex education (non-science or computer science elements)
- In the first instance parents and carers should contact the Head of Futures to discuss their concerns and arrange to see the specific resources, as all sex education is delivered as part of our relationships education with health and safety as its focus.

Requests are:

- made to the Headteacher
- discussed to ensure informed decision-making and the potential detrimental effects of withdrawal
- recorded in line with safeguarding procedures and recorded on My Concern

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide alternative supervision in discussion with the SENDCo and the students' teachers. When a child is three terms away from turning 16, they have the right to opt back into sex education if they wish.

The school will speak to affected students on a case-by-case basis to ensure it is appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Stour Valley Community School evaluates RSHE through:

- lesson observations and curriculum review
- pupil voice and feedback
- safeguarding data and trends
- staff and parent/carer feedback
- knowledge check data
- All of the above will lead to the curriculum being appropriately amended to reflect the needs of our students, parents, carers and staff.

Leaders assess impact on:

- pupil safety and wellbeing
- behaviour and attitudes
- understanding of relationships and risk

Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with Anglian Learning staff, pupils, parents/carers and governing board

Appendices

Appendix A: Curriculum Overview

Full Futures Curriculum and Supporting Resources:

Science:

The Science curriculum studied during Years 7 and 8 looks at the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty/adolescence; as well as the biology of human reproduction which includes the study of the menstrual cycle and the process of fertilisation. Students will later go on to study how the foetus develops and how factors such as smoking, and alcohol can impact on foetal development. The Combined and Triple GCSE Science course includes the study of the role of hormones in controlling the menstrual cycle, methods of contraception and their relative efficacy. Additionally, the genetics of how sex is determined in humans is explored by studying the work of Gregor Mendel. Students studying Triple Science study the medical use of hormones to promote fertility. The Combined and Triple

Science course also exposes students to the methods of bacterial growth and infectious disease, and how the spread of pathogens can affect human health.

Religious Studies:

In Key Stage Three, students investigate relationships and family life across different faiths and worldviews. They consider various beliefs and their own opinions on marriage, divorce, and homosexuality. Students investigate marriage ceremonies in different religions and consider why discrimination and prejudice in all its forms are wrong. Key Stage 4 GCSE RS students study Edexcel Religious Studies Spec B from Christianity and Islam. The Marriage and the Family unit looks at marriage, divorce, sex, homosexuality, contraception, equality in the family, gender prejudice and discrimination and how the Church supports families. All students consider interfaith marriage, homosexuality and arranged marriages as part of core RS lessons.

Computer Science:

The Computer Science curriculum covers all aspects of online/social media safety; including that related to material of a sexual nature that can be accessed/shared online. Students are taught about their rights and responsibilities in an increasingly 'connected' world. Risks associated with inappropriate use of the internet for sharing/viewing personal information and compromising material is discussed. Students are taught about what to do if somebody's online behaviour is causing concern, as well as the law governing sexual behaviours online, such as the sharing of indecent images. The curriculum content covering online/social media and e-

safety is covered during the Autumn term, with refresher lessons delivered during the summer term.

Futures:

The full curriculum is available here: [to be uploaded with new topics]

An overview of topics and the wider school programme is available here: [Microsoft PowerPoint - FUTURES \(stourvalley.org\)](#)

Additional support materials for parents and carers can be found here: [Futures \(PSHE Plus\) - Stour Valley Community School](#) This includes the fortnightly bulletins.

The Futures programme includes the following topics across both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, with age appropriateness/relevancy of topics taken into account:

- Puberty & Body Changes
- Body Image
- Media
- Relationships (including 'Healthy' Relationships
- Coercive Controlling Behaviour and Abusive Relationships)
- The Family
- Sexual Relationships
- Contraception
- Safe Sex
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Consent
- LGBT relationships
- Seeking Health Advice & the Importance of Health Screening
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Sexual Harassment in schools and elsewhere
- Protected Characteristics.

The majority of this content will be delivered in lessons. Some topics will be considered more than once, but from perspectives appropriate to the age of students. E.g. 'Relationships' in Year 9 and Year 10. Some elements of the

programme may be delivered by external agencies. E.g. Bespoke workshops/assemblies from the School Nursing Service (or similar).

By the end of Year 9 students will have considered:

- The benefits of sexual behaviour within a committed relationship.
- How they see themselves affects their self-confidence and behaviour.
- The importance of respecting difference in relation to gender and sexuality.
- How it feels to be different and be discriminated against.
- Issues such as the costs of early sexual activity.
- The unacceptability of prejudice and homophobic bullying.
- What rights and responsibility mean in relationships.
- The concept of consent.

By the end of Year 11 students will have considered:

- The influences and pressures around sexual behaviour and appropriate responses.
- How to confidently seek professional health advice.
- How to manage emotions associated with changing relationships with parents and friends.
- The management of conflict resolution.
- How to say no and deal with pressure situations assertively.
- Making informed choices about the pattern of their lifestyle which promote well-being.
- Ways to assert themselves and challenge offending behaviour.
- Ways to demonstrate of empathy and sympathy and the ability to respond emotionally to the range and depth of feelings within close relationships.
- How to work co-operatively with a range of people who are different from themselves.
- Consent in the context of sexual activity.

Equal Opportunities

The RSE programme responds to the needs of individual students and takes the cultures, faiths and family backgrounds of all students into consideration. We strive to ensure that all students are treated fairly and that there is no discrimination or bullying on the grounds of race, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation or religion. Casual or 'everyday' sexism, misogyny, homophobia or transphobia is not tolerated. Students with Special Educational Needs may be given extra support from SEND staff where appropriate. Organisation RSE is delivered through the Science,

Computer Science, Religious Studies and Futures curriculum. RSE is co-ordinated by the subject leaders in these areas, who are responsible for the planning, implementation and review of the teaching and learning. Outside agencies and specialists deliver aspects of the curriculum. RSE is monitored through book scrutiny, lesson observations and feedback from students. In other subject areas of the curriculum occasions may arise when moral and ethical issues are addressed.

Appendix B: Parent Communication and Consultation

Safeguarding

RSE may bring about disclosures of safeguarding children issues and all staff are aware of how to report concerns. In these cases, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

Confidentiality

Nurses working within the school will be guided by the Fraser Guidelines, that provide guidance for health professionals and details of these are provided in the DfE document Sex and Relationship Education (2000). The Designated Safeguarding Lead will have a discussion about safeguarding with any health professional or other adult before they start work with SVCS students. This is to ensure they are familiar with the relevant policies and expectations regarding correct practice and responding to issues, including those that may relate to Child Protection Matters. All staff and visitors will work in accordance with the school's Safeguarding (Child Protection) Policy; produced in line with the most recent version of the document Keeping Children Safe in Education. Staff should ensure that students understand that they are not in a position to guarantee confidentiality. The school will make it clear to students that some information cannot be kept confidential and that, if certain disclosures are made, the school may need to involve outside agencies. This will be particularly relevant in cases where students are engaging in, or intending to engage in, sexual activity below the legal age of consent or any case where the member of staff and the Designated Safeguarding Lead may judge that the student is at risk. Students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support in the event of such disclosures. Whilst it is the school's policy to inform and involve parents, there is no legal responsibility for teachers to do so if this is against the express wishes of the student concerned.

Explicitness and Delivery

Staff should make it clear that lessons will cover essential knowledge as well as the opportunity for reflection and discussion. It is important that teachers can present the course information with a sense of openness but that the opportunity for students to ask questions is there. Questions about individual contraceptive advice cannot be dealt with by teaching staff and referral/signposting will be made to a relevant external agency. Staff will try to respond to students' questions providing answers that are framed in terms of factual accuracy. Ground rules will be used in all RSE lessons and technical vocabulary will be used to replace slang words as part of the learning. Accessing Sexual Health Services Staff will make referrals to appropriate health professionals, through consultation with the Raising Standards Lead. The drop-in service based at the school is provided by a school nurse who is qualified to

counsel young people on sexual health matters, distribute condoms, prescribe emergency contraception and support the delivery of RSE through the Futures programme.

Communication of this Policy

The policy will be made available on the school website. The Curriculum for Science, Computer Science, Religious Studies and Futures can also be found on the website. Training will be regularly delivered to staff. A printed copy of the policy will be available on request. Resources will also be viewable on request. Please contact info@stourvalley.org if you would like to see this information. Review This policy will be reviewed every three years by the Governing Body, following consultation with parents, students, staff and relevant external agencies.