



# Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Created by: Leonie Smikle (Assistant Principal – Student Development)

To Be Reviewed: September 2026

## **Introduction**

Within PSHE sits relationships and sex education (RSE). This policy covers Nottingham Academy's whole school approach to RSE. We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our students. RSE is a lifelong learning process of acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs and attitudes about sex, sexuality, relationships and feelings.

Effective RSE can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by students. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to make responsible and informed decisions about their sexual health and well-being.

Through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.

At Nottingham Academy our RSE is an integral part of our whole school PSHE curriculum. It is a developmental, planned programme which is taught by tutors as well as being delivered through assemblies and workshops with external agencies and health professionals.

The RSE at Nottingham Academy complies with the statutory obligations to deliver RSE under sections 34 and 35 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). It covers the statutory guidance as outlined in the [DfE's Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education](#). The RSE is supported by statutory requirements as set out in the National Curriculum for Science.

## **Aims**

The aims of RSE at Nottingham Academy are to:

- Give all students objective and accurate information concerning sexual relationships
- Provide a secure environment in which sensitive discussions can take place with adults who are prepared to engage with them about issues that are concerning them
- Equip students with ability to make important and considered decisions about their own relationships.
- Develop the skills to understand and avoid unwanted sexual experiences
- Teach students about aspects of the law regarding sexual relationships and sexuality
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Develop self-esteem, self-awareness and communication skills
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Encourage students to respect the needs, rights and identity of others
- Provide support and information for young people and their parents

## Curriculum

The PSHE curriculum has been developed in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. We consulted with parents about the RSE component of the curriculum in 2021. We are satisfied that our curriculum is fit for purpose. Each year the PSHE curriculum is sent out to parents and feedback is sought to help identify any areas for improvement.

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.

The full [PSHE Curriculum Plan](#) can be found on our [website](#). The RSE topics for each year group are below:

Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
<b>FRIENDSHIPS &amp; BULLYING</b>	<b>ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>HEALTHY &amp; HARMFUL RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>FAMILY LIFE</b>
Healthy and Unhealthy Friendships	Social Media Use	Boundaries	Healthy vs Harmful Relationships	Healthy Pregnancy
Conflict Resolution	Online vs. Offline Friendships	Trust	Stereotypes and Expectations	Fertility and Miscarriage
Banter vs. Bullying	Managing Online Conflict	Communication	Impact of Porn on Relationships	Adoption and Fostering
Maintaining Friends	Cyberbullying	Empathy and Understanding	Sexual Harassment	Marriage
Forgiveness	Insta vs. Reality	Personal Values in Relationships	Exploitation	Impact of Family Breakdown
Kindness and Empathy	Online Echochambers	Self Safety and Sexting	Digital Abuse	Forced Marriage and HBV
<b>DIVERSITY</b>	<b>TYPES OF RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS</b>	<b>COMMUNITIES</b>	<b>EXAM SEASON</b>
British Values	Indicators of Positive Relationships	Laws Around Sex	Multiculturalism	
Protected Characteristics	Parental Responsibility	Consent and Age of Consent	Extremeism and Terrorism	
Religion	Relationships with Family	Sexual Health + Contraception	Radicalisation and PREVENT	
Race	Professional Relationships	Teenage Pregnancy	Hate Crimes	
<b>PRIDE WEEK</b>	<b>PRIDE WEEK</b>	<b>PRIDE WEEK</b>	<b>PRIDE WEEK</b>	
<b>CULTURE DAY</b>	<b>CULTURE DAY</b>	<b>CULTURE DAY</b>	<b>CULTURE DAY</b>	
Year Reflections	Year Reflections	Year Reflections	Year Reflections	

A safe environment for discussion is created through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques. A wide range of appropriate resources are developed for the delivery of the RSE content. These are available for inspection by parents on request.

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their CPD and it is included in our continuing professional development (CPD) calendar. There are frequent learning walks to quality assure delivery.

To support effective delivery of the RSE, experienced and knowledgeable visitors (such as school nursing team) are invited to deliver assemblies and workshops.

## SEND

Students with special educational needs and disability (SEND) are assisted in accessing RSE curriculum with appropriate support and intervention. All students are valued equally and are entitled to fully access a broad and balanced curriculum, including RSE. Therefore, all students with SEND are taught alongside their peers for as much time as possible. Pupils may, however, be withdrawn from the mainstream curriculum to be given specialist and tailored sessions if this approach best facilitates them to participate in the RSE content. Flexibility to tailor content and teaching is needed to meet the specific needs of students. Furthermore, teachers recognise the importance of listening to the concerns of young people, particularly those who may find it more difficult to express emotions.

## Safeguarding

All staff are trained in safeguarding. Teachers are aware that effective RSE and developing a thorough understanding of what is and isn't appropriate in a relationship can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. In this situation, staff follow internal [safeguarding policies](#) including informing the safeguarding team.

Prior to teaching, teachers will consult with year teams and the safeguarding team to ensure that issues can be addressed prior to the teaching of the subject and appropriate differentiation can be made.

Nottingham Academy will be mindful of our students who are currently or have previously experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships. We recognise that as a school we have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where students can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.

Key aspects of the law relating to sex which will be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy. Nottingham Academy has a zero-tolerance response to peer-on-peer abuse, and educates students how to recognise the signs and report to a range of professionals.

Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, will be addressed sensitively and clearly.

Nottingham Academy educates students on the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). Our students will also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM.

As well as addressing this in the context of the law, our students may also need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk.

### **Equality and Diversity**

The Academy is committed to working towards equality, promoting positive approaches to difference, and fostering respect for people of all cultural and social backgrounds whatever their age, sexuality, faith, ethnicity, gender, disability or additional educational need. Developing positive relationships between students of all backgrounds is an essential aspect of the work of the school.

### **Withdrawal**

From 1st September 2020 parents have had the right to withdraw children from any sex education (but not relationships or health education) that is not part of the National Curriculum Science programme.

We will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

If you would like to withdraw your child from sex education, then please complete [this form](#). There will then be a conversation with a member of the Senior Leadership Team to fully understand this request and to clarify the purpose and nature of our curriculum.