



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Ermysted's Grammar School

The Governing Body of Ermysted's Grammar School (the 'School') ratified this policy on **2 July 2026**.

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1. Aims

The aim of relationships and sex education (RSE) is to provide balanced information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. The aim of RSE is to also explore healthy relationships both on and offline, including the characteristics of positive relationships, mutual respect, consent and care for family life. Our values and aims underpin all teaching, in all subjects, including RSE.

We encourage:

- A caring, safe environment where all pupils can develop their talents and skills.
- Respect for all members of the school community and all who work on the school site.
- To foster attitudes of tolerance, justice and forgiveness.
- To ensure all staff and pupils have access to equal opportunities.
- All staff and pupils to enjoy opportunities to develop their self-respect.
- Providing opportunities for pupils to become effective citizens ready to play a positive part in society.

The aims of the RSE Policy are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

In addition, the teaching of RSE seeks to prepare all pupils for adult life in which they can:

- Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements, and behaviour.
- Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.
- Understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and non-sexual relationships.
- Avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex including violence in teenage relationships.
- Understand the true meaning of consent, permission seeking and refusal.
- Communicate and behave in a respectful manner towards people around them which contributes to a safe, inclusive environment/community.
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate language for sex and relationship issues.
- Develop awareness and understanding of their evolving sexuality and that some people use terms to describe their gender identity; learn the biological facts about sex; and understand the legal protections under the Equality Act 2010.
- Challenge discrimination, sexism, and all forms of prejudice, be an 'upstander' and not a 'bystander'.
- Understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- Understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- Have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves in a variety of situations including from sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse, unintended conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.
- Be aware of sources of help for all young people, acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support, and treatment if necessary.
- Know how the law applies to sexual relationships, enthusiastic consent, gaslighting, sexting/nudes and online safety.

This policy will provide clear progression from what is taught in primary in Relationships Education. We will build on the foundation of RSE and, as pupils grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught intimate relationships, pupils will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult. Throughout our curriculum, pupils will be taught the relevant legislation whenever applicable.

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSE to all pupils under the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#). In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (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

At Ermysted's Grammar School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with the Local Authority, Governors, staff, pupils and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process took place throughout May 2026 and involved the following steps:

1. **Review** – the Deputy Headteacher in collaboration with the PSHCE Coordinator collated relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
2. **Pupil consultation** – pupil voice is undertaken at frequent intervals, and the results are used to inform developments within the RSE curriculum.
3. **Staff consultation** – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations.
4. **Parent and carers consultation** – Parents and carers received a draft version of the RSE policy and encouraged to contact the school with any feedback.
5. **Ratification** – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.
6. **Published** – the policy was published on the school website and all stakeholders informed.

4. Definition

For the purpose of this policy:

- RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.
- RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.
- RSE is **not** about the promotion of sexual activity.

More generally, RSE is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, sexuality and sexual health. It should help support pupils gain accurate information, develop skills and form positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It also gives pupils essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful, loving and non-exploitative relationships, staying safe both on and offline. It enables them to take responsibility for their body, relationships, reproduction, sexual health and wellbeing.

Sex education is defined as learning about the fertilisation of a human egg.

5. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary. We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents/carers, pupils and staff, taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils.

If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online. For more information about our curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

6. Delivery of RSE

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 studies (RS). Pupils also receive additional sessions covering sexual health aspects of the RSE curriculum which are delivered by trained local health professionals and/or external speakers. External providers will follow the school's curriculum plan and will be supervised by teaching staff. Materials will be age-appropriate and evidence-based.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

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

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

Where concepts are contested or subject to public debate, these will be presented as such.

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

6.1 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

The school is committed to ensuring that all pupils can access the RSE curriculum, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Teaching will be adapted to meet a range of learning needs, using clear, accessible language, appropriate pacing, and differentiated materials where required. Staff will work closely with the SEND team to ensure that pupils with cognitive, communication or sensory needs receive content in a way that is meaningful, comprehensible and supportive. Where necessary, additional adult support, pre-teaching, or alternative resources will be provided to ensure that every pupil can engage with the curriculum and develop the knowledge and skills needed to stay safe, healthy and informed.

6.2 Use of resources

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 pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our pupils
- 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 pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Roles and responsibilities

The Senior Leader responsible for PSHCE and RSE oversight is **Mr A Jackson**, Deputy Headteacher, and the PSHCE Coordinator is **Mr A Macnab**.

The Governing Body

The governing body has the responsibility to ensure Ermysted's Grammar School has an up-to-date RSE policy that describes the content and organisation of RSE through the national curriculum science and other curriculum areas such as PSHCE. The policy should also clearly reference any onsite sexual health services.

The governing body, in co-operation with the Headteacher, is expected to involve families, pupils, and the wider school community to ensure that RSE addresses the needs of pupils, local issues and trends. The governing body needs to ensure pupils are protected from teaching and materials which are inappropriate, having regard to the age, religious and cultural background of the pupils. It will ensure that the policy is available to parents and that parents know of their right to withdraw their children.

Governors will ensure that the programme and the resources are monitored and evaluated. This monitoring applies to both the taught curriculum and the wider areas of school life e.g. Curriculum days. The policy will be reviewed on a three-year cycle or sooner if necessary. There is a link governor for RSE.

The governing body has the responsibility to ensure the school is meeting requirements under legislation (Equality Act, 2010) so it needs to ensure the curriculum reflects the diversity of modern Britain, including representing a range of families and sexualities in the school.

The governing body has the responsibility through the statutory guidance [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)¹, to consider how pupils may be taught about safeguarding, including online, through teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. This may include covering relevant issues through PSHCE, and/or through RSE.

The Headteacher

The Headteacher has responsibility for the day-to-day management of all aspects of the school's work, including teaching and learning. The Head teacher's responsibilities in respect of RSE (delegated to the Deputy Headteacher i/c PSHCE) are to:

- Work with governors to ensure compliance with the statutory guidance.
- Liaise with the PSHCE coordinator to monitor the effective delivery of RSE within the curriculum.
- Keep the governing body fully informed of provision, issues and progress around RSE issues.
- Act upon any concerns which may arise from pupil's disclosure during RSE sessions.
- Monitor staff training requirements in relation to effective teaching and learning of RSE.
- Ensure parents/carers are informed when their children will be taught RSE to support a partnership approach but also that they do have the right to withdraw their child from components of RSE (see section 9).

¹ [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK](#)

The PSHCE Coordinator

The PSHCE Coordinator, alongside the Deputy Headteacher i/c PSHCE, is responsible for all aspects of the subject including RSE. In respect of RSE, responsibilities are to:

- Ensure the implementation and quality of long-term and medium-term RSE schemes of work.
- Ensure that staff are confident in the skills to teach and discuss RSE issues as trained, competent staff are essential to raise standards in RSE.
- Consider the needs of all pupils, and to achieve this recognise that the school might need to address some specific issue.
- Consult with pupils to inform provision around RSE and use the schools' *Growing up in North Yorkshire* biennial survey results to inform planning.
- Access appropriate training.
- Monitor and advise on RSE organisation, planning and resource issues across the school.
- Ensure procedures for assessment, monitoring and evaluation are included.
- Liaise with the named governor for RSE.
- Liaise with any service provision to support aspects of sexual health.
- Liaise with the Deputy Headteacher i/c PSHCE to coordinate with external providers to ensure their provision meets the outcomes of the planned provision using age-appropriate materials.
- Liaise with the Deputy Headteacher i/c PSHCE to ensure parents/carers are informed when their children will be taught RSE to support a partnership approach but also to inform of their right to withdraw their child.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-scientific components of RSE

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

Pupils

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

Parents / Carers

The School aims to work in active partnership with families, value their views and keep them informed of the RSE provision. If a parent/carer has any questions about the RSE provision, then time should be taken to address their concerns. Families are able to view the resources used to teach the statutory RSHE content and can contact the Deputy Headteacher and/or PSHCE coordinator with any questions.

8. Political impartiality

The school recognises its duty to ensure that RSE is delivered impartially and without the promotion of political or ideological positions. Teachers will distinguish clearly between factual content, legal requirements, and areas where opinions differ. Contested or sensitive issues will be handled with balance and care, ensuring pupils are not presented with any single viewpoint as the correct one. Our aim is to equip pupils with the skills to analyse information, understand differing perspectives, and make informed, independent judgements.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-scientific components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 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 3 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher. A copy of 2025-26 (Governing Body)

withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. The Headteacher may refuse a request in exceptional circumstances, for example because of safeguarding concerns or a pupil's specific vulnerability. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar. The Headteacher will also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE, where relevant.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by **Mr A Jackson**, Deputy Headteacher and **Mr A Macnab**, the PSHCE Coordinator. Monitoring will be conducted through learning walks, work scrutiny and pupil voice. All teachers of PSHCE and RSE will use the resources developed by the PSHCE Coordinator to ensure consistency. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems. This policy will be reviewed on a three-year cycle by the Deputy Headteacher for PSHCE. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Board.

Appendix 1: RSE Curriculum map

Year Group	Term	RSE Topic Details
Year 7	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the need for self-care and learning to respect our bodies whilst understanding natural development through puberty and menstruation. Introduction to emotional wellbeing: recognising feelings, early signs of stress, and how to seek help. Understanding body image and how media/social media can influence self-esteem.
	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss what is meant when referring to online safety and warn against the viewing of sexually explicit materials e.g. pornography. Understanding online risks including scams, fraud, phishing, and manipulative online behaviour. Introduction to healthy friendships, boundaries, and respect.
	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the benefits and importance that physical activity has on contributing to having a healthy mind and body. The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low-risk alcohol consumption in adulthood. Understanding sleep, healthy routines, and their impact on wellbeing. Basic personal safety: roads, water, rail, and safe travel.
Year 8	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering what makes healthy, respectful friendships, leading to all relationships, including understanding that some families and relationships may involve LGBT people. Discuss the law and the meaning of the term consent. Recognising unhealthy relationship behaviours, including controlling behaviour and early signs of coercion. Understanding sexual harassment and how to report concerns safely.
	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the need in society for respect for others, the term “grooming” and how this may come about, considering case study evidence. Understanding misogyny, sexism, and harmful gender stereotypes. Exploring online influences, including algorithms, echo chambers, and harmful content.
	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining physical health and fitness. How contributions to society can be made through blood, organ and stem cell donations and the laws surrounding this. Understanding mental health: stress, anxiety, coping strategies, and how to access support. Media literacy: recognising misinformation and unrealistic portrayals of bodies and relationships.
Year 9	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the availability of sexually explicit materials online and through social media, including pornography and the sharing and viewing of indecent images of children. Being SAFE when searching online.

Year Group	Term	RSE Topic Details
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the impact of pornography on expectations, relationships, and attitudes (including links to misogyny). Recognising harmful sexual behaviours and peer-on-peer abuse.
	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A scientific approach to sexual health and contraception, considering the laws surrounding underage sex, consent and abortion. Introduction to STIs, transmission, prevention, testing, and treatment. Understanding fertility, conception, miscarriage, and pregnancy choices. How to access sexual health services confidentially.
	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How poor diet can affect health and life expectancy. Have a knowledge of how tooth decay can be reduced. Become aware of what cancer is and how treatments have developed over the years. How cancer charities fund research. Understanding self-examination (breast/testicular) and early detection. Healthy sleep, screen time, and digital balance.
Year 10	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What constitutes a marriage, considering the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting. Understand the laws associated with consensual sex and rape. Healthy intimate relationships: communication, boundaries, expectations, and emotional readiness. Understanding break-ups, rejection, and managing relationship conflict safely.
	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider what may constitute an unhealthy relationship and the effects of stalking and harassment. Discuss the importance of online safety when considering gambling and debt accumulation. Understanding financial exploitation, online scams, and digital fraud. Recognising coercive control and gaslighting.
	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss menstruation, considering hormone balance and how these can affect behaviour. To include in extreme cases intersex athletes and the evolution of sporting rules and the appeals process. Understanding gender identity, sexual orientation, and inclusive language (in line with statutory guidance). Mental health: depression, self-harm awareness, and how to seek help safely.
Year 11	Term 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being SAFE in relation to how we are protected by the law. Discuss the concepts of and laws relating to rape, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM. Understanding violence against women and girls (VAWG), misogyny, and societal attitudes. Recognising and responding to sexual harassment in public spaces.

Year Group	Term	RSE Topic Details
	Term 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the need for self-care and learning to respect our bodies, the need for a healthy diet and the effects of eating disorders for all genders, using case study evidence. • Understanding grief, loss, bereavement, and coping strategies. • Managing exam stress, pressure, and transitions into adulthood.
	Term 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider drug abuse and discuss case study evidence showing how substance abuse could affect mental health, in the short, medium and long term. • Understanding addiction (including gaming and online behaviours). • Personal safety in public spaces, travel safety, and emergency first aid basics.

Appendix 2: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

Topic	Pupils should know
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children • What marriage is, including their legal status, e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony • Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into • The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships • The roles and responsibilities of parents/carers with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting • How to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice) • That in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control • What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable • The legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online

Topic	Pupils should know
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online • Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them • What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online • The impact of viewing harmful content • That specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners • 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, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, and how these can affect current and future 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, including online)
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship • That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing • The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women • That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others • That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available • The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help) • How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing

Topic	Pupils should know
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="443 244 1794 272">• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment<li data-bbox="443 285 1218 314">• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour<li data-bbox="443 327 1868 355">• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

Appendix 3: Parent/carer form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE



Parent/Carer Withdrawal from Sex Education within RSE Request

Pupil Name: Click or tap here to enter text.	Form: Click or tap here to enter text.
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education: <i>Please provide a rationale for your request to remove your son. Please include any further information you wish the school to consider.</i> Click or tap here to enter text.	
Parent Name: Click or tap here to enter text.	Date: Click or tap here to enter text.
Completed forms should be emailed to admin@ermysteds.uk with the subject 'RSE Withdrawal Request'.	
To be completed by the school	
Agreed actions: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Date: Click or tap here to enter text.	
Document uploaded to CPOMS: Click or tap here to enter text.	