

SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE ACADEMIES TRUST (SLAT)

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Aspire - Challenge – Achieve

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Trust Wide/BA/SA/GA/CA	Annually	Chief Executive Officer or Trustees

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Rationale and Ethos

This policy has been reviewed and updated to reflect the Department for Education Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025) for implementation from September 2026.

The main aim of SLAT schools is to ensure that all students receive a high-quality, inclusive RSE education within a safe, sensitive and caring environment, underpinned by mutual respect and evidence-informed practice. The curriculum is age-appropriate, responsive to local and national safeguarding, health and wellbeing priorities, and designed to meet the needs of all learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

All aspects of RSE are taught at a level appropriate to the age, maturity and development of students, ensuring that every student has equitable access to the knowledge, skills and understanding required to develop healthy, respectful relationships, make informed choices and stay safe both online and offline.

Schools are required by law to provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education in accordance with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025) which comes into effect from September 2026. Health Education is also mandatory in all Government funded schools, which includes content on puberty. The RSE programme will be taught as a key element of Personal, Social and Health Economic education (PSHE) and Social, Moral, Spiritual and Cultural (SMSC) in the school curriculum. RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE includes education about healthy relationships, consent, respectful behaviour, healthy masculinity, misogyny, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), harmful sexual behaviours, incel ideology, online harms, deepfakes, sextortion, child exploitation, coercive control, domestic abuse, scams, artificial intelligence and responsible digital citizenship.

Within this context, SLAT is committed to providing high-quality, meaningful Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We define Relationships Education as learning about healthy, respectful relationships, consent, online relationships, safeguarding, equality, domestic abuse, coercive control, sexual harassment and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). We define Sex Education as learning about contraception and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and sexual health.

RSE can be described as lifelong learning about physical, moral, social and emotional development. It promotes an understanding of the importance of loving and caring relationships and supports students in developing healthy, respectful and consensual relationships. It includes learning about sexuality, sexual and reproductive health, and the knowledge and skills needed to make safe and informed decisions. Students are also taught about risks associated with relationships and online activity, including pornography, sexting, sharing nudes, child sexual exploitation, scams, artificial intelligence, deepfakes and other emerging online harms. Through an inclusive curriculum, SLAT promotes equality, challenges discrimination and fosters respect for all people, including those with protected characteristics, ensuring that every student feels represented, valued and supported.

We view the partnership of home and school as vital in providing the context of RSE. SLAT's RSE education is part of a shared responsibility with parents and is in no way intended to usurp, but to complement the parental role. Students are encouraged to inform their parents of the issues which have been discussed as part of sex education to enable further discussion if parents/students so wish. It should also be taken into consideration that some students have been given no guidance by parents regarding sex education and therefore this is one approach to facing issues which are primarily a family responsibility.

The RSE curriculum was developed by the PSHE/SMSC leads across the SLAT. The consultation process in the development of the RSE policy has involved reference to both national and local guidance included consultation with the following groups:

- Student feedback
- Senior Leadership Team
- Teaching and support staff
- Parents / Carers
- Local Governing Body
- SEN co-ordinator
- Student voice surveys
- Pastoral teams
- Safeguarding leads
- Public health data and local safeguarding priorities
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025).

Roles and Responsibilities

PSHE/SMSC SLAT Leads

The RSE programme will be led, designed and reviewed by PSHE/ SMSC SLAT leads at all Trust schools. They are responsible for ensuring that all statutory elements of the guidance from the DfE are applied appropriately. The PSHE/ SMSC leads are responsible for monitoring and evaluating the programme in the school's context. They are also responsible for liaising with visitors to the classroom whose expertise will be used to enrich learning and to address specific national and local health priorities. They are responsible for ensuring that resources, curriculum content and external visitors remain compliant with current statutory guidance and are available for scrutiny by parents upon request.

SLAT SLT Line Link

Is responsible for liaising with the SLAT PSHE/SMSC leads for the overall development and implementation of the programme.

Teachers

The majority of RSE is delivered through SMSC during tutor time, the session will be taught by a teacher that has been allocated to the tutor group. Sessions requiring more depth will be included in the PSHE SOW. Teaching staff will receive RSE training on school training days which will support students with the difficult questions that they may ask during the programme.

All teaching staff delivering RSE will adhere to the OFSTED guidance that recommends that it is necessary for students to learn the correct language associated with body parts so that they are able

to talk confidently with health professionals. Therefore, teachers of RSE will use the anatomically correct language for body parts, while acknowledging common terms used by some people.

Outside Agencies

All external visitors will be quality assured and selected in accordance with the Trust Visitor Policy. Resources, lesson plans and teaching materials will be reviewed in advance by the PSHE/SMSC Lead to ensure that they are evidence-based, age-appropriate, inclusive and compliant with current statutory guidance. Visitors will be made aware of this policy and will be expected to work within the values and principles outlined within it. Visitors will also be provided with relevant safeguarding information, including the Trust's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, reporting procedures and expectations regarding confidentiality and disclosures prior to working with students. The PSHE/SMSC Lead will ensure that visitors' contributions are aligned with the learning outcomes of the Trust's RSE programme and that all materials used are available for parental review upon request. A member of teaching staff will be present throughout all sessions delivered by external visitors to ensure continuity, safeguard students and support effective learning. Following PSHE events and visitor sessions, student feedback will be gathered to evaluate the quality, relevance and impact of the provision and will be used to inform future bookings and curriculum planning.

Parents

SLAT's RSE programme is part of a shared responsibility with parents. Students are encouraged to inform their parents of the issues which have been discussed as part of sex education to enable further discussion if parents/students so wish. Parents can request resources to discuss sex education further at home.

Legislation (statutory regulations and guidance)

We are required to teach Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education in accordance with the Department for Education Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025), which is implemented from September 2026.

Documents that inform the school's RSE policy include:

- Education Act (1996)
- Learning and Skills Act (2000)
- Education and Inspections Act (2006)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014)
- Keeping children safe in education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2016)
- Children and Social Work Act (2017)
- SLAT Safeguarding Policy (appendix 16) – Reporting concerns linked to RSE
- Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures
- OFSTED School Inspection Handbook
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (July 2025)
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021)
- Teaching Online Safety in Schools- DFE guidance (latest version)
- Online Safety Act
- Age of Marriage Act 2023
- PSHE Visitor and External Speaker Policy;
- Equality Policy and Statement;
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy;

- SEND Policy;

Curriculum design

The prime aim of the teaching of RSE in schools is to make students aware of their emerging maturity and to enable them to explore issues about adulthood and to give them the opportunity to develop an objective awareness of their own sexuality.

The purpose of the RSE programme is:

- To encourage students to value and respect themselves and others, both online and offline, and to develop self-respect, dignity and empathy.
- To ensure students make informed choices regarding online relationships.
- To develop understanding of healthy, respectful and responsible relationships.
- To provide knowledge about relationships, sexuality, human reproduction, sexual health and reproductive health.
- To encourage students to make correct, informed and safe choices in relation to Relationships and Sex Education.
- To ensure that students know how and where to access support, report concerns and seek help for themselves or others when they feel unsafe in a relationship or are worried about abuse, exploitation or harm.
- To encourage students to appreciate the value of stable family life, marriage and the responsibilities of parenthood.
- To promote equality, challenge discrimination and foster respect for diversity in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.
- To develop understanding of consent, personal boundaries and responsible decision-making.
- To ensure students can recognise unhealthy relationships, domestic abuse, coercive control, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and child exploitation, and know how to seek support.
- To educate students about Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), misogyny, healthy masculinity, incel ideology and harmful gender stereotypes.
- To develop students' understanding of online safety, including social media, pornography, sharing nudes, sextortion, deepfakes, artificial intelligence, online scams and other emerging online harms.
- To develop awareness of the physical, emotional and social consequences of unsafe sexual behaviour, including STIs and unintended pregnancy.
- To educate students about puberty, fertility, reproductive health, menopause, miscarriage and pregnancy loss.
- To develop understanding of HIV prevention, including PrEP and PEP.
- To educate students about Gillick competence, medical consent and how to access healthcare, treatment, support services and reliable sources of information.
- To present facts in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner, set within a clear framework of values and an awareness of the law relating to relationships, sex and health.
- To ensure that Relationships and Sex Education is inclusive, accessible and relevant to all students, recognising and respecting diversity and meeting the needs of students from all backgrounds, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- To respond to local and national safeguarding, health and wellbeing priorities.

It is important to note that the personal beliefs and attitudes of teachers will not influence the teaching of RSE in the Trust.

RSE at SLAT schools is taught by the teachers within PSHE lessons (one hour lesson a week) in Years 7-8. Years 9-11 are timetabled to have PSHE for one hour every fortnight on a rotating timetable. Y9-13 will cover PSHE and RSE content 3 times a week in SMSC tutor time. This is a continual programme and is taught in modules throughout Years 7 to 13. The nature of the programme ensures that all students with special educational needs are able to access the information. Learning about relationships and sex education in PSHE/SMSC education lessons will link to and complement learning within the Science curriculum.

In all key stages the teaching of RSE is delivered mainly through discussion with the help of resources such as videos, posters, worksheets and booklets. Materials are updated as new resources become available. Outside agencies and school visits are used where appropriate. We will make sure that any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality. SLAT schools remain responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used do not undermine the fundamental British Values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

In Year 7 students are taught about the key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing. This is a statutory requirement set out in the Department of Education's guidance. During the academic year the PSHE/SMSC leads will hold an assembly with students born of female sex to discuss puberty and periods. Period products will be distributed to the students born of female sex. This is a national programme in association with the Tampax Company. During the assembly students both of male sex will have a separate provision in lesson teaching about male puberty.

In Year 8 students learn about positive relationships as part of the mental health unit. Students also are taught about forced marriage and FGM (Female Genital Mutilation). This is a statutory requirement set out in the Department of Education's guidance. During the academic year the PSHE/SMSC leads will hold a repeat assembly with the students born of female sex to discuss puberty and periods. Menstrual products will be distributed to the relevant students.

In Years 9–11, students will learn about Relationships and Sex Education as part of the SMSC programme, which is delivered three times per week during tutor time. Students will study a broad range of topics including relationship building, healthy relationships, marriage, family life and parenthood, consent, personal boundaries, contraception, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), reproductive health, fertility awareness, puberty, menopause, abortion and teenage pregnancy. Students will also develop their understanding of equality, gender identity, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), misogyny, healthy masculinity, incel ideology, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic abuse, coercive control, stalking behaviours, child exploitation and personal safety. Online safety education will include social media, pornography awareness, sharing nudes, sexting, revenge porn, sextortion, online scams, deepfakes, artificial intelligence (AI), harmful online influencers and digital safety. Year 9–11 students will also benefit from the support of external agencies during PSHE events to enhance and reinforce the Relationships and Sex Education content taught through both PSHE and SMSC.

Sixth Form students will continue to develop their understanding of healthy adult relationships, consent, sexual and reproductive health, fertility, financial wellbeing, independent living, employment rights and responsibilities, personal safety, accessing healthcare services and preparing for work and adulthood.

PSHE/SMSC subject leads regularly liaise with class teachers and the Trust SENCO to make sure that the needs of all pupils are met with a curriculum that is fully accessible and in which education, health

and care plans are followed. As part of this liaison teaching is differentiated to support students with SEND to fully access the curriculum. Where appropriate this includes the use of teaching assistants to provide a personalised adaption of the RSE teaching materials.

Supporting Vulnerable Learners

The Trust recognises that students with SEND may be more vulnerable to harmful sexual behaviour, exploitation, abuse, bullying, coercive relationships and online harms. Teaching materials will be adapted as required to ensure full accessibility and understanding. The Trust will work with safeguarding staff, SEND staff and pastoral leaders when delivering particularly sensitive content.

Assessment

Students will self-assess their knowledge prior to the unit so that a baseline can be established. At the end of each theme students will review their knowledge and reflect on their progress. Students will have opportunities to review and reflect on their learning during lessons through discussion points. There is an end of unit knowledge test to assess their overall understanding from specific points of the unit. Assessment information, student voice and safeguarding trends will be used to review curriculum effectiveness and respond to emerging student needs.

Safeguarding

The RSE curriculum supports safeguarding by helping students to recognise grooming, exploitation, coercive control, domestic abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, misogyny, Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), sexual violence, online harms, radicalisation, criminal exploitation and sextortion. Students are taught how to report concerns, seek support and access help both within school and through external agencies. Staff involved and not involved in the delivery of RSE are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of a disclosure relating to sexual abuse, exploitation or any safeguarding concern. All staff will follow the Trust's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and reporting procedures, using MyConcern where appropriate, and will inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy DSL at Bourne Academy, Spalding Academy, Giles Academy or Cowley Academy.

Safe and Effective practice

We will ensure a safe learning environment by delivering lessons where students feel safe and encourage participation by using a variety of teaching approaches with opportunities to develop critical thinking and relationship skills.

During the course of the RSE programme there will no doubt be occasions when RSE teachers and students will be faced with handling difficult questions. Ground rules are essential to provide an agreed structure to answering sensitive or difficult questions. Where necessary staff will use distancing techniques, such as the use of an anonymous question box. Teachers will endeavour to answer questions as honestly as possible, but if faced with a question they do not feel comfortable answering or able to answer within the classroom, they have the right to decline to answer and provision would be made for another person or persons to meet the individual child's needs. This may involve referring the child back to their parent/carer or an appropriate advice service for an answer. Where a question gives rise to a safeguarding concern advice should be sought from the Safeguarding Lead and the use of My Concern.

Staff members will not discuss and will decline to answer questions relating to their own personal lives or sexual choices.

Annual meetings are taken with the SEN department to ensure that when teaching RSE it is in a safe space and at an appropriate pace for the relevant students. This provision will be taught within the SEN department and to ensure that SEN needs are met and that the students understand the content.

Teacher Wellbeing

The Trust is very aware of the importance for teachers to maintain their own wellbeing when delivering the RSE curriculum. This may be topics that trigger feelings or thoughts relating to historical, recent or current trauma. In these circumstances the Trust will adopt a supportive and understanding position on the teacher's individual circumstances.

Engaging stakeholders

We work closely with parents to ensure that they are fully aware of what is being taught. The RSE policy was sent to a selection of parents to inform them of the new policy and to ask for any appropriate feedback regarding the new policy. Parents and carers may request to view any curriculum materials, lesson resources or external visitor materials used within RSHE. The Trust is committed to openness and transparency and will respond positively to requests for access to materials.

Parents were informed about the policy and the curriculum at the beginning of Year 7. Parents/guardians are informed of the basic outline of the sex education programme across the Trust. The policy is available to parents through request and will be accessible through the school website with other school policies. Parents are also welcome to come into school and discuss the programme of study in more depth. This may be relevant where a religion may not condone the teaching of contraception or if they are concerned about other moral issues. If parents and carers have complaints which cannot be resolved through informal discussion they will be directed to the Trust's curriculum complaints policy.

We will notify parents by letter in Years 9-11 when Relationships and Sex Education will be taught. A Reach more parents will be sent prior to PSHE events to inform parents of the schedule and what RSE provision is being taught that day.

As of September 2020, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the RSE lessons (only the sex education elements that are not part of statutory Science National Curriculum) up to and until three terms before the child turns 16, when the student will have the right to opt back into sex education. During removal provision would then be made for the student in a student support room. The school will maintain records of withdrawal requests, provide appropriate and purposeful alternative education and ensure that students understand their right to opt into sex education from three terms before their sixteenth birthday. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education, E-safety or Health Education. If a parent or carer wishes for a student to be withdrawn from all or part of sex education the request should be made to the Headteacher. When a request is received, the school will endeavour to meet with the parent or carer to discuss the background to their request and attempt to set out and reassure them about the Trust's approach and benefits of pupils accessing sex education in school.

In line with DFE guidance there may be exceptional cases where the nature or degree of a pupils SEND needs possibly combined with their domestic or social circumstances mean they are demonstrably very likely to be at unusual risk from sexual activity or sexual exploitation.

Below is the RSE programme which demonstrates how it has been categorised and if it is part of the Science National Curriculum.

Health Education	E-Safety	Relationships	Science National Curriculum
• Case studies • Gillick competence • Medical consent • Reproductive health • Puberty • Menopause • Pregnancy loss • Fertility awareness	• Social media • Dangers of pornography • Revenge Porn • Sexting • Artificial Intelligence • AI generated images • Online scam • Fake social media accounts • Online Relationships • Coercive Control • Violence Against Women and Girls • Deepfakes • Sextortion	• Relationships • Consent • Choices • Sexual Harassment • Online Relationships • Equality • Domestic Abuse • Coercive Control • Sexual Harassment • Violence Against Women and Girls • Healthy masculinity • Misogyny • Incel ideology	• STIs • Contraceptives • Fertility • Pregnancy • Reproductive Health • Menstrual cycle • Puberty • Anatomy • Sexual Health

Monitoring, reporting and evaluation

The RSE policy is monitored and evaluated by the Trust Associate Education Director of PSHE and SMSC and those teaching it, and any change discussed with the appropriate line managers, Pastoral team Chief Executive Officer and any changes brought to the attention of the Governors. Student voice will meet regularly with the PSHE and SMSC lead to discuss PSHE/SMSC and RSE. The Pastoral team will be influential in adapting and amending planned learning activities in the PSHE/SMSC programme.

At the end of the RSE unit students will be set a reflection assessment. The information gathered will be used to assess the students' confidence in the subject and will help the leads to adapt further sessions.

The contribution of external agencies and visitors will be monitored and evaluated through staff feedback, student voice and curriculum review processes.

As stated in the PSHE/SMSC policy RSE will be monitored through scheduled workbook quality checks and weekly drop ins by Heads of House and the PSHE and SMSC lead.

RSE policy review date

The RSE policy at SLAT is regularly reviewed to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of all students, staff and parents, and remains compliant with current Department for Education guidance and statutory requirements. Following the implementation of the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance (September 2026), this policy will be reviewed in July 2027 by the PSHE/SMSC SLAT Leads and thereafter reviewed annually, or sooner should legislation, safeguarding guidance, local priorities or Department for Education requirements change.