

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

Date of last review	September 2025
Review cycle	Annually
Policy due for review and approval by Local Governing Body	Autumn 2026

Mission Statement

Saffron Valley Collegiate seeks to provide a personalised educational experience that identifies and responds to the circumstances and needs of each individual child or young person. In doing so it enables them to progress academically.

Equalities Statement

All who work at the Saffron Valley Collegiate are committed to the celebration of diversity, and the challenging of disadvantage and discrimination, in all of its forms.

These values are explicit to the ethos of Saffron Valley Collegiate and implicit in all policies and practices.

This policy is written in conjunction with the SVC Safeguarding, Early Help and Child Protection Policy

The Saffron Valley Collegiate will be otherwise referred to as 'SVC' or 'school' in the following document.

This policy has been updated to reflect the changes to RSHE outlined in the Draft Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSHE) and Health Education Guidance published by the Department for Education on 16th May 2024. This revised guidance is open to consultation and changes to current school policies and curriculum are not statutory until final publication. This policy will be reviewed on publication of the final guidance to ensure Saffron Valley Collegiate meets its statutory responsibilities.

The updated draft guidance outlines significant changes to previous statutory guidance issued to schools in 2019. This draft guidance includes age limits on teaching specific topics; the topic of gender identity should not be taught and that parents should be consulted with regarding changes to RSHE policies and on curriculum. The guidance also makes clear the right for parents to request that their child is withdrawn from RSHE.

At SVC we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all pupils under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We also have regard to 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

The Aim of RSHE

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

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

To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, pupils need knowledge that will enable them to make informed and ethical decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships. High quality, evidence-based teaching of relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) can help prepare pupils for the opportunities and responsibilities of adult life, and can promote pupils' moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development. Effective teaching will support young people to cultivate positive character traits, including resilience, self-worth, self-respect, honesty, integrity, courage, kindness, and trustworthiness.

(DfE Draft RSHE Guidance 2024)

This policy covers Saffron Valley Collegiate's whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). We believe that RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. 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 take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being.

SVC is aware that students attending the PRU may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation, bullying and other issues. RSE is particularly important for students with social, emotional and mental health needs or SEND.

RSE at SVC will be adapted to ensure these subjects are accessible for all students. Where appropriate some sessions may be delivered in single sex groups or on a 1-2-1 basis to facilitate greater learning for students. SVC aims to provide inclusive education for all students; therefore, the planning, delivery and resources for RSE will give consideration to the cultural and religious beliefs of our students and we will recognise that family structures will vary across the cohort.

The curriculum and resources will be reviewed annually to ensure that SVC is compliant with the age restrictions on sensitive topics and that resources covering the broader concept of gender identity are removed and that harmful stereotypes around sex and gender are dispelled. Discriminatory beliefs, language and behaviour will be challenged appropriately and monitored with additional support and intervention made available for students as necessary.

SVC aims to ensure that all students are provided with RSE that supports their physical, emotional and moral development; and helps them to learn to respect themselves and

others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Each key stage receives age appropriate RSE learning which is delivered through assemblies/tutor time/PSHE lessons/1:1 support and targeted group work. RSE planning and delivery is underpinned by SVC values - **Be Ready, Be Respectful, Be Safe**.

CURRICULUM

“Relationship and Sex Education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, moral, cultural, emotional and physical development of students at school and of society and preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life”
(DfE and Health Education Guidance 2020)

RSE teaching and learning at SVC aims to provide students with a greater understanding of the following concepts:

Attitudes and values

- Learning the importance of values, individual responsibility and moral considerations.
- Learning the value of family life, and stable and loving relationships.
- A clear understanding of the arguments for delaying sexual activity and resisting pressure.
- Link RSHE with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour such as drugs, smoking and alcohol.
- Exploring healthy relationships.
- Learning the value of respect, love and care.
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas.
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making.
- Understanding the law with regard to consent and legal age of consent.
- Exploring violence against woman and girls and how to recognise coercive and controlling behaviour in relationships.

Personal and social skills

- Learning to explore and manage emotions and feelings in relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- Developing an understanding of the consequences of choices.
- Managing conflict.
- Learning how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.

Knowledge and understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at age 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.
- Learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay.
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy and terminations and repeated terminations.

Staff who have been specifically trained may provide additional support where needed for students about different types of contraception, including emergency contraception and its effectiveness, and give students additional information and

guidance on where they can obtain confidential advice, counselling and where necessary, support the young people in getting specialist health advice and prevention through contraception treatment, as part of a discussion about healthy and safe relationships. Young people are also able to ask to see the school nursing team. SVC recognises the importance of parental involvement in all aspects of their child's development and education therefore students will be encouraged to speak to their parents and parents will be kept informed of support offered to students unless it is deemed that informing parents would increase the risk of harm to the student. 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).

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.

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

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

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

USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND MATERIALS

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to pupils. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't 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.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
 - Are age-appropriate
 - Are in line with pupils' developmental stage
 - Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
 - What they're going to say
 - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The governing board will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, for sharing resources and materials with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see below – Parents' Right to Withdraw).

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-statutory 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' RIGHT TO WITHDRAWAL

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory 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 and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action.

Any request for withdrawal from sex education will result in the parent/carer invited for a meeting with the Headteacher or other senior member of staff to discuss the request. This is to understand the request and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. This will include discussing the benefits of sex education, and any detrimental effects of withdrawal, including social and emotional impacts on the child, and the likelihood that the child will hear their peers' version of what was said in class, which may not be accurate. These meetings will be documented and a record kept of this process.

MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The delivery of RSE is monitored by **Kathy Callaghn, PSHE Coordinator** through:

- Lesson observations, learning walks, work scrutiny, etc.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

SAFEGUARDING

Where safeguarding concerns arise, staff report these to the Safeguarding Team, who will investigate further and take any necessary action. Students are made aware that staff at the school will share information in the best interests of the child, and as such confidentiality cannot be taken for granted. However, when information is shared, students are always informed how and why, and are given support and reassurance around should further concerns may arise.

In relation to health concerns and queries, students are signposted towards appropriate agencies – such as health care providers, clinics, the School Nursing Team for further support, confidential advice, resources and treatment.

In the event of staff becoming aware of a student under the age of 16 who is having or

considering having sexual intercourse, the student would be encouraged and supported to speak to their parents/carers, as well as signposted to the relevant services.

When signposting students, due diligence will be given to ensure students are signposted to appropriate organisations that are free from agenda or ideology and who employ suitably qualified staff.

Person responsible for updating this policy:

Head Teacher