



# Mulberry UTC

## Relationships and Sex Education Policy

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Version control		
Version	Reviewed	Changes since last version
6	Feb 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included points in Aims</li> <li>• Included upcoming changes for RSE in Statutory guidance</li> <li>• Additions to delivery of RSE</li> <li>• Additions to training and reference to KCSIE</li> </ul>
5	Feb 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• None</li> </ul>
4	Feb 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Director of school improvement, replaced with Senior Vice Principal (p.6)</li> </ul>
3	Feb 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LGBT = to LGBTQ+</li> <li>• Vice principal = Director of School Improvement</li> <li>• Replace Director of Pastoral Provision with Assistant Principal</li> </ul>
1	Jan 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace Assistant Principal with Director of Pastoral Provision</li> </ul>

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## 1. Aims

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

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Give pupils 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
- Foster healthy and respectful whole school relationships and behaviour between pupils.
- To promote student's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life.
- Promote the delivery of RSE in an appropriate and evidence-based manner, in accordance with statutory guidance.
- Complement safeguarding by equipping pupils with the knowledge to recognise abuse, harassment, coercion and unhealthy relationships, including online communication and activity.
- Promote respect for all individuals and groups, including those with protected characteristics.
- Provide factual information which does not seek to promote any particular lifestyle, belief or identity.

## 2. Statutory requirements

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education. In teaching RSE, we are 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](#). At Mulberry UTC we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

In line with the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidelines introduced in September 2025 by the government (for implementation in September 2026), additional topical issues and content will be incorporated in the PSHE scheme of learning and programme.

The revised guidance adds emphasis on:

- Challenging sexism, misogyny, homophobia and harmful stereotypes actively in and out of school.
- Helping pupils learn about positive role models and ethical behaviour in relationships, beyond just consent.
- Addressing new digital challenges, such as AI-generated sexual imagery and influence from harmful online communities.

### 3. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE

Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

### 4. Definition

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 such as:

- Healthy and unhealthy relationships
- Consent, boundaries and respect
- Sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

#### 4.1 Why is RSE education in schools important?

High quality RSE helps create safe school communities in which pupils can grow, learn and develop positive, healthy behaviour for life. It is essential for the following reasons:

- Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Children and young people want to be prepared for the physical and emotional changes they undergo at puberty, and young people want to learn about relationships. Older pupils frequently say that sex and relationships education was ‘too little, too late and too biological’. Ofsted reinforced this in their 2013 Not Yet Good Enough report.

□ RSE plays a vital part in meeting schools' safeguarding obligations. Ofsted is clear that schools must have a preventative programme that enables pupils to learn about safety and risk in relationships.

Schools maintain a statutory obligation under the Children Act (2004) to promote their pupils' wellbeing, and under the Education Act (1996) to prepare children and young people for the challenges, opportunities and responsibilities of adult life. A comprehensive RSE programme can have a positive impact on pupils' health and wellbeing and their ability to achieve, and can play a crucial part in meeting these obligations. RSE plays a critical role in safeguarding by helping pupils recognise risk, abuse, coercion and exploitation, both online and offline.

## 5. 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 education (RE).

In Year 10 and 11 students RSE curriculum is delivered in PSHE lessons taught once a week for 50 minutes.

In Year 12 and 13 students RSE curriculum is delivered in PSHE sessions delivered via one extended tutorial every half term and weekly personal development sessions in morning registration.

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

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health
- Sexual harassment
- Consent and exploitation.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to ensure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, 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).

Content is sequenced progressively and taught in an age-appropriate way, in line with statutory guidance. External visitors are supervised, content is checked in advance, and teaching remains the responsibility of the school.

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

### 6.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the principal to account for its implementation.

### 6.2 The principal

The principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 7).

### 6.3 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 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 principal.

The Assistant Principal of Pastoral Provision is responsible for the long-term plans of RSE and for ensuring the lessons are of a high quality. All teaching staff may be responsible for the teaching of RSE.

### 6.4 Students

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

## 7. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children 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 using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Principal.

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

Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

## 8. 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 principal 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.

Training includes safeguarding, handling disclosures, trauma-informed practice and online safety, in line with Keeping Children Safe in Education.

## 9. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Vice Principal and ELT through:

- Learning walks
- Book/folder scrutinies
- Self-Evaluation fortnight
- Pupil voice

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

This policy will be reviewed by the vice principal annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

## **Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know**

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</li> <li>• How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</li> <li>• The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</li> <li>• The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</li> <li>• That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</li> <li>• What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</li> <li>• 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</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</li> <li>• What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</li> <li>• The impact of viewing harmful content</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</li> <li>• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</li> </ul>
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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)</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</li> <li>• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</li> <li>• That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</li> <li>• The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</li> <li>• The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• 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</li> <li>• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</li> <li>• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</li> <li>• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>

**Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE**

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS**

Name of parent		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent signature			

**TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL**

Agreed actions from discussion with parents	