



Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy (Secondary)

Date of Review: May 2026

Date of Next Review: July 2027

Author: H Bowe

Contents Heading

1.WHAT IS RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION (RSE)? 3

2. PRINCIPLES AND VALUES..... 3

3. CURRICULUM DESIGN 4

4.SAFE AND EFFECTIVE PRACTICE 5

5.INCLUSIVITY 5

6.ENGAGING PARENTS AND STAKEHOLDERS 5

7. RIGHT TO BE EXCUSED FROM SEX EDUCATION (RIGHT TO WITHDRAW) 6

EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT 7

1.What is Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)?

RSE involves learning about healthy relationships, different forms of commitment (including marriage, civil partnerships and cohabitation), relevant laws around relationships, consent and sexual health, this is for relationships on and offline. Research shows that successful RSE works to delay the onset of sexual activity, meaning we can empower our students with the knowledge, strategies, skills, language and confidence to enable them to make safe and healthy choices when it comes to their relationships. This forms part of the Laurus Trust's approach to safeguarding our students.

RSE forms part of our provision to meet the national curriculum, including, but not limited to, science and computing, as well as an integral part of our whole school Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education taught throughout school. In a time of rapid change, with new and unpredictable opportunities and challenges constantly emerging, our aim is to equip our students with the knowledge and skills to keep them safe now, and in the future, both on and offline. The Laurus Trust defines relationships and sex as follows:

- **Relationships** - friendships, relationships with peers, trusted adults, those in position of trust, as well as romantic, intimate or sexual relationships (including within a marriage or civil partnership).
- **Sex** - by sex we are referring to any sexual act.

2. Principles and Values

The Laurus Trust believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all young people regardless of background or circumstance.
- Encourage every student to grow and learn.
- Be set within the wider school context and support family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of differences.
- Foster the values of love, respect, equality and caring for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on RSE can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals (e.g. the School Nurse team), social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers where necessary.

Relationships and Sex Education within Secondary Schools in The Laurus Trust has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

- Learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices;

- Learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, marriage and civil partnerships;
- Learning about the nurture of children;
- Learning the value of respect, love and care;
- Exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas;
- Developing critical thinking as part of decision-making;
- Challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour.

Personal and Social Skills

- Learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- Learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice;
- Developing an understanding of the consequences of choices made;
- Managing conflict within relationships and about them;
- Assessing and managing risk to make informed choice to keep themselves safe;
- Empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter).

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning about the experience of being a young person as a potential partner/parent;
- Laws relating to sex, relationships, consent and rape/sexual assault, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion and harassment (both on and offline)
- Forced marriage
- FGM (female genital mutilation)
- Pornography and explicit material as a distorted image of body image, relationships and sex
- Internet safety and harms
- Understanding of relevant religious teachings representative of our students' beliefs around RSE topics as well as signposting to student's faith
- LGBTQ+ awareness – individuals and relationships should be respected by all
- Understand when and how to report issues

3. Curriculum Design

Our curriculum is responsive to the emerging needs of our students, which is identified through student voice, local data, national data and current affairs as well relevant DFE guidance.

RSE is predominantly taught through the PSHE curriculum [Beliefs and Values – where appropriate], and RSE topics are also covered in subject areas such as science.

Laurus Trust schools have experts who deliver training to any staff delivering RSE which ensures our curriculum is age appropriate and is a sequenced and spiralled programme that builds on prior learning as pupils progress through The Laurus Trust.

To support our curriculum, we may use external providers (for example the school nurse team), we use our visitor protocol (link to new policy) to ensure our principles and values are upheld in their delivery.

Our pedagogical approach to RSE uses PSHE as a brave and safe space with ground rules such as distancing (so that personal issues aren't discussed, e.g. through use of scenarios to assess learning), mutual respect, and signposting.

Our resources build upon accredited resources through reliable organisations such as PSHE

Quality Assurance

RSE is monitored and evaluated by our senior leadership team, as well as Heads of Department, our Trust Director for Personal Development and Trustees. This is through staff training, collaborative planning, learning walks, lesson observations, book scrutiny and staff and student voice.

4.Safe and effective practice

In any case where child protection procedures are required, the teacher will follow our Safeguarding Policy.

Dealing with questions responsibly

If and when asked questions that arise in RSE lessons, professional judgement would be used as to whether the question will be answered in lesson in an age-appropriate way or as part of a wider safeguarding conversation, and appropriate signposting will be provided.

This is complemented by our signposting in every PSHE lesson, where students learn appropriate sources of help.

5.Inclusivity

Our RSE curriculum is inclusive of all learners. We ensure our resources are accessible to all students and are sensitive to their needs, our resources are personalised to ensure accessibility. Under the Equality Act (2010) we have a duty not to discriminate against people on the basis of their Protected Characteristics (in the context of RSE this includes disability, religion, race, sex, gender reassignment or sexual orientation). Our curriculum is sensitive to diverse communities, e.g. religions or the LGBTQ+ community (including parents and students).

Some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation due to the nature of their Protected Characteristic, we may tailor content to meet individual needs to help keep our students safe.

6.Engaging parents and stakeholders

Successful PSHE, and therefore RSE work in collaboration with parents and guardians, as such we hold awareness events and bespoke meetings to support this, as well as sending support home on how to talk to your children about RSE. Support is also available on our school websites [\[link to PSHE section in each school website\]](#).

All curriculum resources are available to view in school upon request, where this is not possible, schools may share copies of materials for parents, providing parents agree that they will not copy the content or share it further.

This policy has been written in collaboration with Laurus' Trustees, which is part of our ongoing

quality assurance of RSE.

Parental Consultation on this policy will happen every 3 years starting from 2026.

7. Right to be excused from sex education (right to withdraw)

There is no right to withdraw from relationships education. This is in line with the DFE Statutory Guidance for RSE (sections 16-23): [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#)

Some parents/carers prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of sex education. Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their child/ren from all or part of the sex education programme except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. Science lessons).

Parents/carers will have a right to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, school will make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16.

Parents/carers are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing to the Head of School. The request must include the following information:

- Name of child
- Form and Year
- Name of person making the request
- Date of the request
- Reason for requesting withdrawal
- Any other information that the person making the request believes to be important

The process is the same for pupils with SEND, however there may be exceptional circumstances where the head teacher may want to take a pupil's specific needs when making this decision.

Equality Impact Statement

Names and titles of people involved with this assessment	Hayley Bowe & Natalie Turvey Rachel Robinson Assistant Trust Director of Inclusion	
Impact assessment carried out with regard to identified characteristics	Race ☒ Disability ☒ Sex ☒ Age ☒ Religion & belief ☒ Sexual orientation ☒ Gender Reassignment ☒	
Summary of any issues/proposed changes	N/A	
Date	July 2026	
Date of next review	July 2027	



Laurus Trust
Woods Lane
Cheadle Hulme
Cheshire
SK8 7JY

t: 0161 549 7000
e: enquiries@laurustrust.co.uk
w: laurustrust.co.uk