



RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION (RSE) DRAFT POLICY

September 2027

Responsibility	Head Teacher
Date of last review	31/08/2026
Date of next review by	31/08/2027

Signed:

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Head Teacher

Date:

Date:

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1. Aims

At The Aspire Academy, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) aims to equip pupils with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values they need to form safe, respectful, healthy and positive relationships, now and in the future. In line with the revised statutory guidance (July 2025), RSE aims to:

- Provide a safe, structured and supportive framework in which sensitive topics can be explored openly and respectfully.
- Help pupils understand the importance of mutual respect, kindness, empathy and equality in all relationships.
- Prepare pupils for the physical, emotional and social changes associated with growing up, including puberty and sexual development, appropriate to age and stage.
- Support pupils to recognise and respond appropriately to risk, abuse, coercion and exploitation, including online and technology-facilitated harm.
- Challenge harmful attitudes, including misogyny, sexism, sexual harassment and violence against women and girls, and the influence of pornography and toxic online cultures.
- Ensure pupils know how and where to seek help and support, including within school and from external services.

RSE is delivered as part of a wider PSHE curriculum and contributes to pupils' safeguarding, wellbeing and preparation for adult life. As a school, we use the Jigsaw framework and adapt it for the needs of our pupils.

2. Statutory requirements

This policy is written with regard to the revised statutory guidance Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, July 2025), which comes into force from 1 September 2026. Schools must have regard to this guidance when fulfilling their statutory duties.

This policy also reflects duties under:

- Children and Social Work Act 2017 (section 34)
- Education Act 1996 (sections 403–407)
- Education Act 2002 (section 80A)
- Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty

- Human Rights Act 1998

As a secondary school, we provide mandatory RSE, including statutory sex education, except where the parental right to withdraw applies (see section 9).

3. Policy development

This policy has been developed through:

- Review of national statutory guidance and supporting resources (July 2025).
- Consultation with staff, pupils, Governors and parents/carers.
- Consideration of local context, safeguarding priorities and pupil needs.
- Ratification – once amendments are made, the policy will be shared with governors and ratified

Parents and carers are informed of curriculum content and may request to view all teaching materials, including those provided by external organisations.

4. Definition of RSE

Relationships and Sex Education is lifelong learning about the emotional, social, physical and moral aspects of relationships, wellbeing and sexual health. It includes:

- Families and people who care for us
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media relationships
- Being safe, including personal and public safety
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. Teaching is factual, balanced, age- and stage-appropriate and rooted in safeguarding and respect.

5. Curriculum approach

Our RSE curriculum is planned, progressive and sequenced from Year 7 to Year 11 and delivered primarily through PSHE, with biological content taught in science.

In line with the July 2025 guidance:

- Teachers apply professional judgement to ensure content is age- and developmentally appropriate, while being responsive to issues pupils may already encounter.

- Sufficient space is created for discussion, reflection and questioning within clear ground rules and a safe learning environment.
- Content explicitly addresses emerging safeguarding risks including online harm, AI-generated sexual imagery, deepfakes, grooming, sextortion and financial exploitation.

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 education, tutor time and assemblies.

RSE is delivered by trained staff who:

- Establish clear expectations for respectful discussion.
- Use inclusive, accurate and evidence-based resources.
- Respond sensitively to questions, balancing openness with safeguarding and age-appropriateness.

Teaching emphasises:

- Consent, boundaries and bodily autonomy
- Healthy and unhealthy relationships, including power and control
- The law relating to relationships, sexual activity and online behaviour
- Violence against women and girls, misogyny and sexual harassment
- The impact of pornography and unrealistic sexual norms

Where pupils make disclosures or show signs of distress, safeguarding procedures are followed immediately.

7. Inclusivity

RSE is delivered in line with the Equality Act 2010. Teaching:

- Reflects the diversity of families and relationships in modern Britain
- Avoids stereotypes and stigma
- Promotes respect for individuals with protected characteristics
- Is accessible to pupils with SEND, with reasonable adjustments made where required

Pupils are not taught political ideology or partisan views, and external materials are reviewed to ensure political impartiality, as required by law.

8. Use of external organisations and materials

External visitors may support RSE provision when they add clear educational value. The school ensures that:

- Content is accurate, age-appropriate and aligned with statutory guidance
- Materials can be shared in full with parents/carers
- Visitors follow school safeguarding and conduct expectations

The class teacher remains present during all sessions.

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to request withdrawal from non-statutory sex education within RSE up to three terms before a pupil turns 16. From that point, a pupil may choose to opt into sex education.

Requests must be made in writing to the Head Teacher and will be discussed with parents to ensure informed decision-making. Withdrawal will not apply where there are safeguarding concerns.

Alternative supervised work will be provided.

10. Staff Training

Staff receive regular training on:

- Updated statutory requirements
- Safeguarding and disclosures
- Managing sensitive questions
- Emerging risks (including online harm and misogynistic content)

Training reflects the July 2025 emphasis on teacher expertise and professional judgement.

11. Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of RSE is monitored through:

- Curriculum review and evaluation

- Lesson observations and learning walks
- Pupil voice and feedback

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with statutory guidance and safeguarding priorities.

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Appendix 1

PSHE/RSHE Curriculum Overview (2026-27)

This curriculum overview outlines the key themes and content taught in PSHE across Years 7 to 11. The programme is designed as a spiral curriculum, ensuring pupils revisit and deepen their understanding of key concepts with developmentally appropriate content each year.

Lessons are structured around six core themes drawn from the Jigsaw PSHE framework: Being Me in My World, Celebrating Difference, Dreams and Goals, Healthy Me, Relationships, and Changing Me. While Jigsaw provides the overarching structure, each lesson is adapted to suit our specific cohort and their needs. To meet the needs of pupils with SEND, delivery is further adapted by reducing content load, simplifying language, incorporating visual and practical activities, and allowing additional time for discussion and reflection. Please note that in Year 11, pupils explore five of the six themes due to exam commitments.

The PSHE programme aligns with both the KS3 and KS4 Thrive curricula, ensuring a coherent and progressive approach to developing pupils' emotional wellbeing, social understanding, and resilience. Content is also aligned with the updated statutory RSHE guidance, with careful consideration given to age-appropriate teaching around relationships, health, wellbeing, and consent. The curriculum reflects the most recent updates to Jigsaw materials to ensure that content remains current, inclusive, and responsive to emerging themes and safeguarding priorities.

In addition, the programme connects closely with the Zones of Regulation curriculum taught through the tutor programme across all year groups, reinforcing emotional regulation strategies and promoting consistency across the wider curriculum.

Year	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Year 7	Differences and conflict, influences, gateway emotions, belonging to a group, peer pressure, child-on-child abuse, online safety, sexting, consequences, online legislation, online identity, online gaming-safety and financial risks.	Prejudice and discrimination, equality Act 2010, bystanders, assertiveness, positive and negative Influences, challenging attitudes and negative behaviours, stereotypes, Human Rights, Inclusion, bullying, exclusion and respect	Defining success, setting dreams and goals, skills for the future, what is failure, coping strategies for when things go wrong, building skills for the future and teamwork, health and wellbeing, gang culture and knife crime, county lines	Nutrition and exercise, managing physical activity and mental health, stress and anxiety, effects of substances (nicotine and caffeine), vaping, nutrition, sleep, health choices, physical illness and medicine, personal hygiene, contributing to your community	Changing relationships, consent, healthy relationships, falling out and friendships, social media vs reality, authenticity online, personal space and setting boundaries, healthy and unhealthy relationships	Puberty changes, reproduction facts, menstrual cycle, responsibilities of parenthood, IVF, types of committed relationships and families, UN Rights of a child, media and self-esteem, self-image, FGM, factors affecting hormones and moods

Year	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Year 8	Self-identity, influences, online influence, family and identity, managing expectations, active listening skills, personal beliefs and judgements, first impressions, positive self-talk, marriage, civil partnerships and the law, beliefs and religions, protected characteristics, online and offline identity	Prejudice and persecution, LGBT bullying, the equality act, social justice and hate crimes, multiculturalism and religious tolerance, standing up for what you believe in, celebrating differences	Goal setting, grit and resilience, can money buy happiness? Keeping safe online, income and poverty, budgeting, expenditure, debt and budgeting, poverty, online scams, sextortion, taking risks, staying safe online	Types of health, cardiovascular health and diabetes. Risks, illegal and legal substances, dental health, skin protection, steps to protecting physical health, vaccinations, peer pressure, vaping	AI and media influence, maintaining positive relationships, assertiveness, sexting and sextortion, power dynamics, knife crime, social media platforms, neurodiversity: autism and ADHD, inclusion and equality	Types of close intimate relationships, behaviours in healthy and unhealthy romantic relationships, what makes a healthier relationship? harassment, attraction, love or lust? Sexuality, pornography, and the law, dealing with unwanted messages. Alcohol, risky behaviour and the law

Year	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Year 9	Being in a group, peer approval, perceptions about intimate relationships, consent and personal safety, sexual exploitation, grooming, radicalisation, county lines, positive and negative self-esteem and self-identity, influences, managing risk online and offline, social media, abuse and coercive control	Power of positive language, prejudice, LGBT+ phobia, banter and bullying, reducing fear and promoting equality, cyber bullying and harassment, bias, discrimination, harassment and victimisation, nonconsensual behaviours, changemakers	SMART planning, changing appearances, cosmetic surgery and weight loss products, mental illness and stigma, social media, mental health and self-esteem, deepfakes and AI, harmful and illegal online content, misogyny	The teenage brain, risks and personal safety, drugs and alcohol- physical and psychological effects, belonging, loneliness and inclusion, emergency situations, CPR, cardiac arrest, mental health first aid and support, drugs-the law, safety, classification, supply and possession legislation, health choices (nutrition, stress, sleep)	Equity and equality, healthy and unhealthy relationships, power dynamics, pornography, contraception, pregnancy, STIs, consent, factors to consider in intimate relationships, Gillick Competence Test	Change and managing emotions, importance of sleep in relation to mental health, self-expression, influences, body image, masculinity (positive), online influence, misogyny, incel culture and healthy vs unhealthy online communities, mental health and addiction, the importance of sleep and good routines

Year	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Year 10	Human rights, societal freedom, understanding safety in UK and beyond, stages of grief, loss and bereavement, the law and social media risks, algorithms and use of online data, GDPR the dark web and managing online content/screentime , dealing with disturbing online content (suicide, self-harm, violence), sharing/enhancing of images, risks associated with sharing personal data, AI chatbots and online scams	Human Rights, responsibilities, The European Convention on Human Rights, The European Court of Human Rights, The Human Rights Act 1998, multicultural societies, successful societies, Equality Act 2010, hidden disabilities, discrimination in the workplace, inequality and campaigning for equality, equality in relationships, empowered and disempowered, changing and ending relationships, UK	Resilience, nurturing important relationships, achieving your goals and the impact of physical and mental health, taking care of your mind and body, real v online behaviours, social media usage, the impact of social media on future employment, the body and vital organs, blood, organ and stem cell donation, opting out, balanced lifestyles,	Improving health and good habits, cancer (skin, testicular and breast cancer), common mental health disorders and treatment, substance use and mental health, mental health stigma, sexual health, STIs (transmission, treatment, symptoms) HIV/Aids, safer sex, contraception (barrier/hormonal), threats to health (cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular	Long-term relationships and legal status, the science of attraction, how to have a good relationship with yourself, why do relationships end, unsafe, toxic and unhealthy relationships staying safe and getting help, the law on marriage, cohabitation and the impact on children, the difference between real life and relationships that we see in the media and pornography stalking and	Impact of societal change on young people, role of media on societal change, reflection on change so far and how to manage it successfully. Gaining independence, personal safety, cycling, railway, water safety, transport, alcohol, drink spiking, gender stereotypes in romantic relationships, virginity testing and hymenoplasty, physical and emotional changes, family change, sources of support

		healthcare and accessing a GP	resilience toolkit	disease)	harassment, coercion and abuse, free choice and pressure, the law on sex trafficking and modern slavery	
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Year	Being Me in My World	Celebrating Difference	Dreams and Goals	Healthy Me	Relationships	Changing Me
Year 11	Becoming an adult, age limits and the law, relationships and the law, consent, coercive control, domestic abuse, honour based, violence, arranged and forced marriages, county lines, possession of drugs. The risks associated with gambling, AI and algorithms, emergency situations, first aid, the law on internet use, legal age limits and pornography, social media concerns, sexting		Sleep, anxiety, solutions focused thinking, money and employment, budgeting, tax, debt, credit cards, gambling, future jobs and employment opportunities, long-term family goals, marriage, civil partnership, parenting, developing resilience, types of technology and how it can help us to reach our future goals	Self-worth, identity. Relationships, consent and power imbalance, being ready for sex, coercion, contraceptives, sexual health, STIs and emergency contraception, male and female reproductive/health/fertility (PCOS, endometriosis, PMS, heavy periods), pregnancy choices including adoption, abortion, bringing up a baby,	Stages of a relationship, relationships in the media, our perceptions about sex and relationships, LGBT terminology, gender identity and expression, sexuality, The equality act 2010, perceptions of the LGBT+ community, LGBT+ rights, coming out as LGBT+, unbalanced relationships, domestic abuse and getting help, my body, my choice, FGM,	Preparing for adulthood, managing change, exam stress and revision, reflecting values and identity.

				pregnancy- sources of support, including loss and miscarriage	challenging social norms and cultural practices, breast ironing/ flattening, power in relationships	
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Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
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	