

Relationship & Sex Education (RSE) Policy (Academy21) 2026-2027

Approved by: Amy Husband
Approved by: Executive Headteacher (Academy21)
Date: September 2026
Review date: September 2027

Introduction

At Academy21 (A21), we recognize the importance of providing comprehensive and age-appropriate Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) to our students. Our RSE program aims to empower young people with accurate information, promote healthy relationships, and equip them with essential life skills. This policy outlines our commitment to delivering high-quality RSE in compliance with UK statutory requirements.

Legal Framework

Our RSE program adheres to the following legal guidelines:

- **Statutory Requirements:** We follow the statutory requirements outlined in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, including the revised statutory guidance that comes into effect on 1 September 2026.
- **Inclusivity and Diversity:** Our RSE curriculum is inclusive, respectful of diverse backgrounds, and sensitive to cultural and religious differences.
- **Parental Right to Withdraw:** Parents have the right to withdraw their child from specific RSE lessons. We respect parental decisions and communicate openly with mentors about the content covered.

Delivery Channels

- **PSHE Curriculum:** Our PSHE curriculum is accessible to all students at A21. It forms the foundation of our RSE program and covers a wide range of topics related to relationships, emotional well-being, and sexual health.
- **Blended Education:** As many A21 students receive a blended education, we acknowledge that they may access RSE content elsewhere. Our goal is to complement and enhance their existing knowledge through our PSHE curriculum.
- **Student and Mentor Hubs:** In addition to formal lessons, students can seek advice and information related to relationships and sex through our student and mentor hubs. These hubs provide a safe space for discussions and personalized support.
- **Assemblies:** Regular assemblies address key RSE topics, emphasizing inclusivity, positive relationships, and informed decision-making.

Course Content

Our RSE program is delivered live online and forms an integral part of our Personal, Social, Health, and Economic (PSHE) scheme of work. Here are some examples of topics covered and lessons delivered:

Puberty & Physical Changes

- Understanding the physical changes during puberty (e.g., growth spurts, body hair, menstruation, voice changes).
- Promoting positive body image and self-acceptance.

Healthy Relationships

- Identifying healthy and unhealthy relationships.
- Communication skills, active listening, and conflict resolution.
- Consent, boundaries, and respecting personal space.

Sexual Health & Reproduction

- Anatomy and physiology of male and female reproductive systems.
- Contraception methods, including effectiveness and risks.
- Understanding sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and prevention.

Emotional Well-being & Mental Health

- Recognising emotions and coping strategies.
- Stress management, resilience, and seeking support.
- Addressing stereotypes and challenging gender norms.

Online Safety & Digital Relationships

- Navigating online spaces responsibly.
- Recognizing cyberbullying and protecting personal information.
- Building healthy digital relationships.
- What is sextortion, grooming, AI deepfakes and AI chatbots

LGBTQ+ Inclusion

- Understanding sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Promoting acceptance, empathy, and allyship.
- Addressing LGBTQ+ stereotypes and discrimination.

Monitoring

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Senior Leadership Team. During the year, a range of quality assurance methods will be used to ensure sessions are of a high quality. These may include but are not limited to, work scrutinise, learning walks, lesson observations, focus groups and student surveys.

Regular assessments ensure students' understanding and retention of RSE content.

Feedback from students, parents, and staff informs ongoing improvements.

This policy will be reviewed and approved on an annual basis.

Conclusion

Our commitment to comprehensive RSE ensures that A21 students are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary for healthy relationships, informed choices, and emotional well-being. We value the diversity of our student body and strive to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment.