



ENERGY COAST UTC

RELATIONSHIP AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY (RSE formerly SRE)

2025 - 2028

Approved: Curriculum and Standards

Date: May 2025

Date for Review: May 2028

Revision History:

Revision History			
Revision	Date	Owner	Summary of Changes
1	April 2017	BLS	Created
2	April 2019	BLS	Updated content
3	April 2022	RDP	Full Review of Policy to meet requirements of the Relationships, Sex and Health Education Regulations (2019)
4	May 2025	RDP	Updated content
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Rationale

From September 2020, all schools must have in place a written policy for Relationships and Sex Education (RSE). This policy sets out the framework for Relationships and Sex Education at Energy Coast UTC, providing clarity on how our RSE curriculum is informed, organised and delivered.

This policy was reviewed and developed in response to the following guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2024)
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (DfE, 2019)
- 16-19 Study Programmes Guidance (DfE/ESFA, 2019)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE, 2018)
- Preventing and tackling bullying (DfE, 2017) • Sexting in Schools and Colleges: Responding to incidents and safeguarding young people (UKCCIS, 2016)
- Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years (DfE, 2015) • Equality Act 2010: advice for schools (DfE, 2014)
- National Curriculum in England – Key Stages 1-4 (DfE, 2014) This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:
 - Child Protection Policy and Procedures
 - Anti-Bullying Policy
 - Behaviour Policy
 - SEN Policy
 - Equal Opportunities Policy
 - Curriculum Policy
 - PSHE and Citizenship Policy
 - Science Policy
 - Online Safety Policy
 - IT Systems and Services Acceptable Use Policy

Legal Obligations

The Relationships, Sex and Health Education Regulations (2019) made under the Children and Social Work Act (2017) brought some compulsory changes into effect in all schools from September 2020. Relationships Education is now compulsory for all students receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is now compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. The regulations also make Health Education compulsory in all schools. Details of what is taught as part of Health Education are outlined in our school's PSHE and Citizenship Policy. The focus of Relationships Education is to teach the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships, with particular reference to friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and with adults. The aim of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is to give young

people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.

What Is Relationship and Sex Education?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It involves acquiring knowledge and information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life.

Principles and Values

Energy Coast UTC believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life
- Be an entitlement for all young people
- Be set within the wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. RSE should acknowledge that family is a broad concept and not just one model. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches should be recognised
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. Students should be aware of different approaches to sexual orientation and family structures without prejudice
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students, consulting them about the content of programmes where apt
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers

Relationship and Sex Education in this school has three main components:

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices;
- learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, and marriage;
- 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 appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict;

- empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at 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

Aims

The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, moral, and religious dimensions of sexual health. Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want
- Key aspects of the law relating to sex which will be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for Relationship and Sex issues
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity
- understand the reasons for having protected (safe) sex
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections including HIV
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships

Organisation and Content of Relationship and Sex Education

Energy Coast UTC delivers Relationship and Sex Education through its Personal Development Lessons, Sex and Relationships drop down afternoon and Science lessons at KS4.

Most of the Relationship and Sex Education at The Energy Coast UTC takes place within weekly personal development sessions and as part of the lunchtime tutor time PHSE programme and SMSC drop down sessions. SMSC is taught by a classroom teacher with support from professionals where appropriate.

RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the SMSC curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty and reproduction are also included.

The Science National Curriculum is delivered by the Science Department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction.

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

Specialists, support staff with the teaching of certain aspects of the curriculum. These specialists may include health professionals and theatre groups.

Assessment, where apt, is carried out in accordance with standard school policies and involves teacher, student and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills and attitudes.

Inclusion

- Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups and we will respond to parental and/or student queries in order to allay any concerns that may exist about the RSE curriculum.

- Students with Special Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive Relationship and Sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

- Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that Relationship and Sex education is relevant to them.

Parent and Carer Engagement

At Energy Coast UTC, we continue to be committed to liaising with parents and carers about all aspects of their child's education. As such, we understand the importance of the role of parents and carers in the development of their child's understanding about relationships, sex and health.

From September 2020, the law requires colleges to consult with parents and carers on their RSE policy. Consultation must be carried out when the policy is formed and subsequently whenever it is updated.

At Energy Coast UTC we will notify parents/carers each September when the policy has been reviewed, updated and uploaded to the college website and we will provide a window of opportunity for all parents and carers to respond with their views. The final version of the policy will then be available on the college website for reference.

We will provide additional opportunities for parents/carers to be informed and ask questions about the delivery and content of the RSE curriculum by providing:

- Notification of when RSE topics are to be taught and a summary of the content to be covered
- Opportunities to view and discuss examples of RSE teaching and learning resources
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE

Parents/carers of new students will be provided with all of the above information at the point of admission, regardless of the time of year they join the college.

We understand that parents and carers may have concerns about some aspects of RSE and all views will be listened to and carefully considered. However, the college will ultimately make the final decision about what is to be taught and when, and this will be informed by our statutory obligations as well as the needs of our students.

Parents/carers will be provided with opportunities to find out about the progress of their children in RSE related topics; for example, as part of Annual Reviews of EHCPs, during parents' evenings and within termly progress reports.

Right of Withdrawal of Students from Relationship and Sex Education

RSE is an important part of our curriculum and it is hoped that all students will participate in all aspects of these lessons. However, the school acknowledges the legal rights of parents/carers as described below:

From September 2020, parents of both primary and secondary-aged students will not be able to withdraw their children from any aspect of Relationships Education or Health Education (which includes learning about the changing adolescent body and puberty).

Parents of secondary-aged students will not be able to withdraw their child from any aspect of the National Curriculum for Science (which includes subjects such as reproduction in humans and plants, hormones in reproduction, hormone and non-hormone methods of contraception communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans).

Parents will be able to withdraw their child (following discussion with the school and providing notification to the Principal in writing) from any or all aspects of Sex Education (other than those as listed above) up to and until three terms before the age of 16.

In line with the statutory guidance, where students are withdrawn from Sex Education, we will keep a record of this (including discussions/requests from parents/carers) and we will ensure that the student receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

In line with the statutory guidance, if any secondary-aged student wishes to receive Sex Education rather than be withdrawn, we will make arrangements to provide the student with Sex Education during one of the three terms before the age of 16. **Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues**

For guidance on the teaching of controversial and sensitive issues, please refer to the section headed Organisation and Content of Relationship and Sex Education elsewhere in this document.

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and this should never be offered to students.

In a case where a teacher learns from a student under the age of consent that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to their parents and if necessary to seek medical advice
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the college's procedures
- the young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands the circumstances where confidentiality can be broken.

Health professionals in college are bound by their codes of conduct in one-to-one situations with students, but in a classroom situation they must follow the college's confidentiality policy.

Managing difficult questions

Students may ask their teachers or other adults questions pertaining to sex or sexuality. Given ease of access to the internet, students whose questions go unanswered may turn to inappropriate sources of information. At Energy Coast UTC, the PSHE and Citizenship Lead will provide advice on the type of questions which are appropriate and inappropriate to ask and answer within a whole-class setting and the use of Ground Rules with students will support this process. Depending on the nature of the questions asked, staff will use their skill and discretion to determine whether a question will be answered at the time. They may decide to explain to a student that their question will be returned to at a later time and they may decide to discuss possible responses to questions with a parent/carer, the PSHE and Citizenship Lead, the DSL or a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Answers to questions may then be followed-up with individuals, small groups or a whole class as deemed to be appropriate.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationship and Sex Education

It is the responsibility of the SMSC Coordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of SMSC, in the context of overall college policies for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The SMSC programme will undertake self-evaluation and monitoring through the usual college cycle.

The Governors and Leadership Team are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy.

Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. This includes evaluating and commenting on the college's Relationship and Sex education policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery.

The delivery of the Relationship and Sex Education session is available on the SMSC timetable published on www.energycoastutc.co.uk