

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE) 2026

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Purpose

This policy sets out how the school delivers Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) as part of a broad, balanced, and inclusive curriculum.

The purpose of RSE is to:

- help pupils build safe, respectful and healthy relationships;
- support pupils to understand personal wellbeing, boundaries and responsibility;
- equip pupils to recognise risk, seek help and stay safe offline and online;
- promote respect for others and challenge prejudice, harmful stereotypes and abusive behaviour;
- prepare pupils, in an age-appropriate way, for the responsibilities and realities of later life; and
- contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

High-quality RSE supports pupils' moral, social, and cultural development and helps prevent harm by enabling them to identify when something is not right.

Definitions

Relationships Education: Focuses on building pupils' understanding of safe, respectful relationships and personal wellbeing.

Sex Education: Covers human reproduction, sexual health and intimacy in a safe, age-appropriate and legally informed way.

For the purposes of this policy, RSE refers to the planned programme through which the school teaches these areas in an age-appropriate, carefully sequenced and safeguarding-aware way.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils from Early Years through Secondary
- All teaching and support staff involved in curriculum delivery or pupil support
- Senior leadership and School Board oversight
- External providers delivering RSE content

RSE is delivered through:

- PSHE/Wellbeing curriculum
- Science curriculum (statutory elements such as reproduction)
- Cross-curricular links (e.g. safeguarding, online safety, wellbeing)

For secondary pupils, RSE is statutory. In Albania, relationship, health and sexuality education is delivered through the national curriculum's Life Skills and Sexuality Education programme and related curriculum subjects. At WAT, Relationships and Sex Education is delivered in an age-appropriate manner that reflects both Albanian educational requirements and international best practice, supporting students' physical, emotional, social and digital wellbeing.

The programme covers pupils approximately aged **10-18 years** through progressive, age-appropriate modules.

Legislation and Guidance

This policy complies with:

- Law No. 69/2012 "On the Pre-University Education System in the Republic of Albania"
- Ministry of Education Curriculum Framework
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- Education Act 2002 and Education Act 1996
- Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children

This policy is aligned with the latest DfE statutory guidance (2025 update), which schools must have regard to when delivering RSE. This policy is implemented in accordance with **Law No. 69/2012 "On the Pre-University Education System in the Republic of Albania"**, **Law No. 18/2017 "On the Rights and Protection of the Child"**, and the curriculum requirements of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, including the **Life Skills and Sexuality Education Programme**. The School also takes account of the principles contained within the Albanian Positioning Paper on Comprehensive Sexuality Education and relevant child protection and safeguarding legislation.

This policy has been developed in consultation with parents, staff, and where appropriate pupils. The school will undertake periodic consultation when reviewing this policy to ensure it reflects community needs while meeting statutory requirements. Where the requirements of host-country law differ from UK-based expectations, the school will comply with local law while meeting BSO standards to the fullest extent possible.

Roles & Responsibilities

School Board

- Approves the RSE policy
- Ensures compliance with statutory guidance

Principal

- The Principal is responsible for advising on, endorsing and supporting the implementation of the RSE policy.
- The Principal provides leadership to ensure that RSE aligns with the overall vision and values of the school and the cultural expectations of xxxxxxxxxxxx.
- The Principal oversees the integration of RSE into the broader curriculum.
- Ensures staff are trained and supported
- Ensures parental consultation and communication
- Ensures that curriculum content, materials, and teaching are aligned with statutory requirements and are available to parents on request.
- Makes decisions on withdrawal requests

RSE / PSHE Lead

- Designs and sequences the curriculum

- Ensures content is age-appropriate and compliant
- Coordinates staff training and resources
- Monitors delivery and impact

Teaching Staff

- Teachers are responsible for delivering RSE content strictly according to the curriculum and policy guidelines.
- They create a safe and inclusive learning environment for students to explore RSE topics.
- Teachers play a vital role in facilitating open discussions and addressing student queries related to RSE.
- Report concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Members of SLT/Pastoral teams will meet with parents who request withdrawal from sex education to ensure they understand the curriculum, its purpose, and the implications of withdrawal, and will keep a formal record of such discussions and decisions
- Teachers will follow agreed protocols when responding to difficult or sensitive questions. Where appropriate, they may:
 - Delay responses to ensure accuracy and appropriateness
 - Redirect pupils to trusted adults or sources
 - Follow safeguarding procedures where a concern arises

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

- The DSL will ensure that all safeguarding concerns arising from RSE lessons are responded to promptly in line with the school's safeguarding procedures and statutory guidance.
- Provides guidance on safeguarding issues arising from RSE

Counsellors and Nurses

- School counsellors and nurses will assist with advising and contributing to the content of RSE provision to ensure appropriate and up to date information is contained in the lessons.
- School counsellors and nurses may be asked to deliver, and /or augment provision in certain aspects of the RSE programme as appropriate to lend their expertise.

Curriculum Delivery

RSE is delivered through a sequenced, age-appropriate curriculum that:

- Builds progressively and reflects pupils' developmental stages and needs
- Promotes positive relationships and wellbeing
- Supports pupils to stay safe both offline and online
- Is inclusive and accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND
- Supports pupils to make informed decisions

Primary Phase Focus

- Families, friendships, and respectful relationships
- Personal boundaries, privacy, and help-seeking
- Feelings, wellbeing and communication
- Online safety and media awareness
- Personal safety, including recognising unsafe situations and seeking support; and

- age-appropriate understanding of change and growing up. The 2026 guidance places additional emphasis on online safety, wellbeing and practical personal safety themes

Secondary Phase Focus

- healthy, respectful relationships;
- consent-related respect, boundaries and personal responsibility;
- peer influence, pressure and conflict;
- online harms and current digital risks, including AI-enabled harms, misinformation and harmful online influence;
- sexual health, reproduction and contraception in line with curriculum design and legal expectations;
- personal safety, access to support and help-seeking; and
- equality, dignity and lawful conduct in relationships. The revised guidance and current safeguarding materials place increased emphasis on online harms, misogyny, violence against women and girls, toxic influencers and other contemporary risks.

Parent Engagement

The school recognises parents as key partners in pupils' education and wellbeing. The school will consult parents on this policy and on significant curriculum changes, and will communicate clearly about what is taught and when. The revised DfE guidance places clear emphasis on proactive parent engagement and openness about materials.

To support openness with parents, the school will:

- publish this policy on the school website and make it available on request;
- provide an annual overview of RSE by phase / year group;
- offer opportunities for parents to understand the curriculum, for example through briefings, presentations or an online portal;
- make curriculum materials reasonably available for parental review in accordance with school procedures; and
- respond to parental questions in a timely and respectful manner.

Consultation does not amount to a parental veto over curriculum requirements, but parental views will be considered carefully in the review and refinement of provision

Parents:

- May request withdrawal from sex education (excluding statutory science content) through contacting the Head of Primary/Secondary in the first instance and this will be authorised by the Principal.
- Cannot withdraw pupils from relationships or health education
- Where a pupil is withdrawn from sex education, the school will ensure that appropriate, purposeful alternative education is provided during that time. Pupils will also be informed of their right to opt into sex education from three terms before they turn 16

Right to Withdraw

Parents may request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of the sex education elements of the programme, subject to the limits set by law and guidance. Parents may not withdraw their child from:

- statutory science content;
- relationships education; or
- other curriculum content which the school is required to provide. The DfE guidance also explains that pupils have a right to opt into sex education from three terms before they turn 16.

Withdrawal Process

To request withdrawal, parents must:

- submit the request in writing to the Principal;
- attend a meeting, where appropriate, with the Principal or nominated senior leader to discuss the request, the curriculum and implications of withdrawal; and
- receive the school's decision in writing, which will be recorded on file. This formal process reflects good practice and the current DfE expectation for clear parental engagement and documented decision-making.

Where a pupil is withdrawn, the school will provide appropriate, purposeful supervised education during the period in question

Child Protection, Safeguarding & Confidentiality Protocols

- Child protection, safeguarding, and confidentiality protocols are integral to supporting safe and effective RSE practice.
- These protocols ensure that sensitive information is handled with utmost care, respecting the privacy and well-being of all students.
- Sensitive topics are delivered carefully to avoid distress while ensuring pupils can identify and respond to risk.
- Staff will make clear to pupils that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed where a safeguarding concern is identified. Any disclosures or concerns arising during RSE lessons must be reported immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Clear ground rules will be established in RSE lessons to ensure respectful discussion and safe participation.

Equality, Inclusion and SEND

- The school will deliver RSE in a way that is consistent with the **Equality Act 2010**, respectful of diversity, and accessible to all pupils and **Law No. 69/2012 "On the Pre-University Education System in the Republic of Albania"**, **Law No. 18/2017 "On the Rights and Protection of the Child"**, and the curriculum requirements of the Ministry of Education, Sports and Youth, including the **Life Skills and Sexuality Education Programme**.
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- Teaching and materials will avoid unlawful discrimination and harmful stereotypes, and will promote respect for others. WAT standards and current government guidance both emphasise respect, non-discrimination and appropriate regard to protected characteristics.
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- The school recognises that pupils come from a wide range of family backgrounds and experiences. Teaching will be sensitive to this diversity while remaining age-appropriate, factual and safeguarding-informed.
- RSE will be adapted appropriately for pupils with SEND and for pupils whose vulnerability, prior experience, language needs or development require adjustments to content, pacing, pedagogy or support.

Use of External Providers and Visitors

Where the school uses external agencies or visitors to contribute to RSE, the school retains full responsibility for:

- curriculum content and appropriateness;
- safeguarding and supervision;
- quality assurance of resources; and
- communication with parents.

All external providers must:

- be vetted in line with school safeguarding procedures;
- use materials approved by the school in advance;
- understand and follow the school's safeguarding and conduct expectations; and
- deliver sessions under the oversight of a member of school staff. The school will not enter arrangements that prevent curriculum transparency with parents

Staff Training and Support

Staff involved in teaching or supporting RSE will receive appropriate induction, guidance and ongoing professional development, including on:

- curriculum expectations and sequencing;
- managing sensitive topics and questions;
- safeguarding and reporting routes;
- equality, inclusion and SEND adaptation; and
- emerging online and social risks relevant to pupils. Current statutory guidance and safeguarding materials emphasise both professional judgement and current contextual risks, especially online harms.

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed **annually**, or sooner if there are changes in guidance, law, safeguarding expectations or local context. Evidence may include:

- curriculum reviews and planning scrutiny;
- lesson visits or lesson observations;
- work scrutiny or resource review;
- pupil voice;

- parent feedback;
- staff feedback and training records;
- safeguarding trends, pastoral data and behaviour information where relevant;
- review of complaints or concerns linked to RSE provision.

The School Board through the Regional Head of Schools will receive regular updates on:
The Principal and PSHE / RSE Lead will report periodically to the School Board via the Regional Head of Schools on implementation, strengths, risks and any recommended changes.

Related Policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
- Online Safety Policy;
- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Staff Code of Conduct;
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy;
- Curriculum Policy;
- SEND / Inclusion Policy;
- Data Protection / Privacy Policy;
- Concerns and Complaints Policy. These links support coherent compliance across BSO standards, safeguarding and provision of information.

APPENDIXES

Appendix A: RSE curriculum progression (EYFS–KS5)

What is taught; When it is taught and who delivers it

The September 2026 change requires your RSE policy to move from:

👉 *A high-level statement of intent*

➡ to

👉 *A detailed, transparent, operational document explaining exactly how RSE works in your school*