

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

Local Procedure Title	RSE Local Procedure (Relationships and sex education)
Site	Sketchley School: Sketchley Hall, Forest House and Progression House
ECS Local procedure number and title	ACS 20 Relationships and sex education
Local Procedure template reference	
Local Procedure date	January 2025
Local Procedure review date	August 2025 (in line with new government guidance) Next review: August 2026
Local Procedure Author(s)	Megan Elliott
Local Procedure Ratification	

1. Aim

Sketchley School is an inclusive school which is committed to equal opportunities for all as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. Every pupil is entitled to be treated equally and all staff are expected to commit to this ethos. . This local procedure is intended to support the delivery of relationships and sex education for all pupils.

Sketchley School aims to teach Relationships and sex education (RSE) using a whole-school approach with the aim of creating a community and environment that respects, supports and encourages every learner. RSE is incorporated into the PSHE long term plans across all 3 sites.

Under section 78 of the Education Act 2002 and the Academies Act 2010, the PSHE curriculum must

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society;
- Prepare pupils at the school for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

Sketchley School takes a comprehensive approach towards RSE, providing a programme which offers a diligently devised Scheme of Work across all year groups supporting the development and learning capacity of each learner.

Through the promotion of RSE within PSHE, skills are developed that our learners need in order for them to grow and flourish as individuals and members of society.

Studying PSHE at Sketchley School contributes to helping children and young people to build their personal identities, confidence, self-esteem and understand their Autism diagnosis.

Our objectives are to:

- (a) Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- (b) Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- (c) Help students develop feelings of respect, self-respect, confidence and empathy
- (d) Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- (e) Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- (f) Support students to understand how to keep themselves safe.
- (g) promote a personalised, differentiated curriculum for all which is responsive to the particular (and changing) needs of our individual young people.

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

- (h) ensure that the curriculum is inclusive, informed, structured and relevant to meet the needs of all our young people.
- (i) encourage confidence, high self-esteem, independence and mutual respect.

2. Curriculum design

As of August 2025, our RSHE guidance and schemes of work have been adapted to ensure they address the most challenging issues facing young people today, to make it fit for the digital age, and to equip teachers to support young people to build healthy, respectful relationships in an increasingly complex online world. The new guidance will come into force formally from September 2026.

This updated guidance provides a practical framework that enables schools to teach RSHE in a way which puts children's wellbeing and safeguarding at its heart. The guidance is clear about the importance of ensuring that all lessons are age appropriate. It is clear that parents should be consulted on the content of the RSHE curriculum and have a right to know what their children are being taught, while ensuring that teachers are able to teach about topics preventively, or to respond swiftly when a risk presents itself earlier than anticipated.

The guidance includes significant new content to ensure that RSHE plays its full role in the prevention of violence against women and girls, as part of our Government mission to halve violence against women and girls.

This includes a focus on building healthy relationships skills from the start of primary. It includes an emphasis on opening conversations with young people about positive masculinity and femininity and ensuring that nobody is stigmatised in these conversations. The guidance is clear that teaching about sexual ethics must go beyond teaching about consent, so that young people understand how to act with kindness and respect in all of their relationships.

The guidance includes new content on teaching about suicide prevention. It is clear that schools should have a plan for addressing suicide prevention safely with secondary school pupils, including ensuring that staff have the knowledge and skills to do so.

The section on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender teaching content is also clear up front about the difference in rights based on sex and gender reassignment, to reflect the Supreme Court ruling on the interpretation of the Equality Act in the For Women Scotland case. The guidance is also clear about the need to avoid language and activities which repeat or enforce gender stereotypes, which is in line with the conclusions of the Cass review of 2024.

At Sketchley School, RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum.

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

Our curriculum is set out in a structure designed to meet the needs of each class, but we/individual teachers may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, learners and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If learners ask questions outside the scope of this local procedure, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online (e.g. through search engines). This is regularly reviewed.

Parental Involvement: Actively involving parents and carers in the planning and delivery of RSE. Parents are informed at the beginning of the year as to what their child will be learning. This gives parents the opportunity to discuss further with members of staff.

Multi-disciplinary Collaboration: Working closely with other professionals, such as speech therapists, occupational therapists, and school counsellors, to support students' specific needs and provide a coordinated approach to their development.

External Agencies: Collaborating with external agencies, including local authorities, health services, and charities, to provide students with comprehensive and up-to-date support and resources.

The RSE curriculum should align with the specific needs and abilities of students, catering to their diverse learning profiles. It should be inclusive, accessible, and adaptable, considering their cognitive, physical, and sensory requirements. Our curriculum design includes the following:

1. **Differentiated Content:** The curriculum should offer a range of entry points and progression routes, enabling students at various levels of ability to access and engage with the content appropriately. Materials should be inclusive of different sensory and communication needs, using appropriate visual, auditory, and tactile resources.
2. **Relevant Topics:** The RSE curriculum should cover a wide range of relevant topics tailored to each student. The PSHE curriculum is loosely split in to 6 areas: Healthy me, Changing me, Dreams and Goals, Relationships, Being me in my world and Celebrating differences. RSE largely comes under two areas: Changing me and Relationships. Both areas are taught explicitly throughout the year across all key stages. There are also cross curricula links with other topics/subjects such as reproduction within science.
3. **Practical Application:** The curriculum should facilitate practical application of knowledge and skills through real-life contexts. This may involve role-playing scenarios, community visits, work placements, and engaging with external speakers.

Our Key Stage 2 learners have access to a 2-year rolling plan. This prevents repetition of topics within mixed year group classes.

Personal Development Curriculum Approach

- Our Personal Development curriculum is not divided into pathways, as we believe all students, regardless of ability, should engage with age-appropriate topics. However, we recognise that students have different learning needs, and teaching is tailored accordingly to ensure accessibility and meaningful engagement.
- While all students explore the same core themes, the level of support and delivery methods are adapted to suit individual abilities. This ensures that every learner can develop essential life skills, knowledge, and understanding in a way that is relevant and appropriate to them.

Examples of Teaching Approaches:

- **Stretch and Challenge:**

- o Debates on equality and human rights
- o Independent research on stress management
- o Ethical debates and case studies
- o Discussions on societal norms and policy research
- o Investment simulations, UCAS/apprenticeship support

Learning for Life:

- o Group discussions and personal reflection
- o Journaling and mindfulness strategies
- o Scenario-based learning and role play
- o Media analysis and debating different perspectives
- o CV writing, interview preparation, and workplace visits

Engagement:

- o Social stories, scripted conversations, and role play
- o Visual rules and scenario-based learning
- o Sensory-friendly health education and personal hygiene
- o Clear, direct teaching on safe relationships and visual consent cues
- o Travel training, budgeting, and workplace social interactions

3. Statutory RSE and Health Education

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of learners, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

As an independent special school there is statutory guidance that we must provide relationships education to all learners.

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. We follow statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002.

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under section 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

"Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way."

"This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools."

"In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex."

"These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others' wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society."

Secretary of State Foreword, Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. DfE Guidance 2019 p.4-5.

"Schools are free to determine how to deliver the content set out in the DfE guidance 2019 in the context of a broad and balanced curriculum. Effective teaching in these subjects will ensure that core knowledge is broken down into units of manageable size and communicated clearly to pupils, in a carefully sequenced way, within a planned programme of lessons."

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.
DfE Guidance p.8

"All schools must have in place a written local procedure for Relationships and Sex Education."

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.
DfE Guidance p.11.

The DfE Guidance 2019 at secondary school level relates to the 'intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health' section of the guidance and includes:

- Facts about reproductive health;
- Facts about the full range of contraceptive choices;
- How sexually-transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV/AIDS are transmitted;
- How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment;
- Consent and the law.

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education.
DfE Guidance page29

Despite being an independent school, we include the statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education within our PSHE curriculum as it is vital our learners receive the help, advice and information which will allow them to develop healthy relationships; not just those of an intimate nature; but of all kinds.

We aim to help them understand what a healthy relationship looks like and teach them what is and is not acceptable behaviour; linking this with our approach to positive behaviour management. We want to enable our learners to understand and respect who they are and empower them with a voice which enables them to act according to their beliefs and that supports them throughout their lives.

Our Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) lessons are designed to fully align with the statutory requirements outlined in the UK National Curriculum and the Department for Education's 2019 guidance on Relationships and Sex Education. These lessons provide age-appropriate, comprehensive, and inclusive education to support students' personal development, safety, and wellbeing.

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

1. Statutory Requirements Fulfilled

We ensure that our RSE curriculum covers the following areas as required by the National Curriculum:

Relationships Education

- Families: Lessons explore the diversity of family structures, emphasizing love, respect, and the roles families play in supporting individuals.
- Respectful relationships: Students learn about mutual respect, kindness, and how to manage conflict within friendships and partnerships.
- Online relationships: We educate students on e-safety, recognising manipulation, and protecting their privacy in the digital world.
- Being safe: Lessons provide knowledge about personal boundaries, consent, and recognising when relationships or situations may be unsafe, alongside guidance on seeking help.

Sex Education

- Biological and emotional understanding: Our curriculum delivers clear and accurate information about human reproduction, puberty, and emotional changes in a sensitive and age-appropriate way.
- Healthy relationships: We emphasize consent, communication, and mutual respect in intimate relationships.
- Preventing harm: Topics such as contraception, the prevention of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and the consequences of unprotected sex are addressed to ensure informed decision-making.

2. A Whole-Child Approach

Our RSE curriculum is carefully designed to:

- Foster self-awareness and confidence, helping students understand their rights, responsibilities, and the importance of respect for others.
- Encourage emotional resilience by teaching strategies for managing relationships, stress, and change during adolescence.
- Equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate modern challenges, such as online risks, peer pressure, and societal expectations.

3. Inclusivity and Accessibility

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

Our RSE program is inclusive and sensitive to the needs of all students, ensuring content is relevant to:

- Different cultural and religious perspectives.
- Diverse family structures and relationships, including LGBTQ+ inclusivity.

4. Alignment with Safeguarding Practices

RSE lessons are fully integrated with our school's safeguarding policies to ensure that students can:

- Recognise unsafe situations and know how to seek help from trusted adults or external support services.
- Understand the importance of consent and laws regarding sexual activity, harassment, and abuse.

5. Student-Centred Delivery

We deliver RSE through a combination of:

- **Interactive Lessons:** Discussions, role-plays, and scenario-based learning encourage active engagement and application of knowledge.
- **Expert Guidance:** Lessons are informed by up-to-date advice from PSHE Association and other reputable organisations.
- **Safe Spaces:** Our classrooms foster an environment where students feel comfortable discussing sensitive topics, with clear boundaries for respectful dialogue.

By adhering to the UK National Curriculum and statutory guidance, our RSE lessons equip students with the knowledge, skills, and values needed to form safe, healthy, and respectful relationships, both online and offline. They empower students to make informed decisions, protect themselves and others, and contribute to a respectful, inclusive society.

3. Safeguarding and responsibilities

RSE works with the real-life experiences of learners and it is key that both staff and students are protected in these lessons. A safe and supportive environment is created using ground rules;

- Listen to each other (only one person talks at a time);
- Keep to time;
- Challenge the statement - not the individual making it;

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

- The 'right' not to answer questions;
- No personal questions to be asked by pupils or teachers;
- If giving an example, make it anonymous;
- Everyone has a right to his or her own space;
- Right to Privacy.

Many issues covered in RSE are of a sensitive nature. The ground rules provide a safe working environment for both students and staff. All staff at Sketchley School have an up-to-date enhanced DBS and are fully-trained in the latest Safeguarding updates.

Due to the nature of the topics covered in the RSE education programmes, all teachers are made aware of the Sketchley School guidelines on confidentiality and disclosure. The boundaries around confidentiality and discretion are made explicit to learners and are made distinctive from those associated with disclosing as part of the school's safeguarding local procedure and procedures.

4. Equality

The PSHE and RSE local procedure at Sketchley School promotes respect and value for every individual. The DfE Guidance 2019 (p.15) states, "*Schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect.*"

All Schools in England must ensure they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics. For Sketchley School, this also forms part of the Independent School Standards inspection framework. Individual teachers and classes are given the flexibility to teach about LGBTIQ+ content (for example), but all learners are taught relevant content at a timely point as part of their curriculum. Again, as part of a flexible approach, teaching staff may choose to tailor content to suit the needs of their cohort, such as teaching about LGBTIQ+ during Pride Month.

At Sketchley School, we respect the right of pupils, their families and our staff to hold beliefs, religious or otherwise, and understand that sometimes these may be different with our approach to some aspects of RSE and Health Education. This is detailed in our Equality and Inclusion local procedure.

5. Assessing

As with any learning, the assessment of learners' RSE is important as it enables the teacher to gauge progress and it also informs the development of lessons and associated planning. Learners do not pass or fail this area of learning, but have the opportunity to reflect upon their personal learning experience, set goals, and

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

record their understanding in a range of ways; such as posters, leaflets, reflective diaries and mini-projects.

Progress is also monitored during class discussions, group work, engagement with guest speakers, questionnaires/surveys and peer assessment. Student voice through class discussions and the student council is also used to adapt and amend material for RSE and ensure it is relevant and effective to both our learners and wider community. Whilst there is no specific means of formal summative assessment for PSHE/RSE, it is expected that teachers do record some evidence via Evidence for Learning.

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Senior Leadership Team through: Planning scrutinies, learning walks, etc. Long term plans are provided for delivery and available on the shared area, but it is expected that class teams will deliver these in an appropriate and differentiated way to their cohorts.

6. Responsibilities

Governance

The RSE local procedure will be approved by Sketchley School governance and they will hold the Headteacher to account for its implementation.

Head Teacher

It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to manage any requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory components of RSE.

Deputy Headteacher

It is the responsibility of the Deputy Headteachers to ensure that RSE is taught consistently across the school within Personal Development.

Teaching & Support Staff

The staff across Sketchley School are responsible for:

- The delivery of RSE in a sensitive way;
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE;
- Monitoring progress;
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils;
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE.
- Ensure they are up to date with school local procedure and curriculum requirements
- Provide regular feedback to the senior leadership team on their experience of teaching RSE
- Ensuring that if any concern is raised of a safeguarding nature, they will report this to a designated safeguarding lead

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

Staff do not have the right to opt-out of teaching RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with their Line Manager in the first instance and support will be provided; with appeals made to the Headteacher.

Students

There is an expectation that all learners across Sketchley School fully engage in RSE and follow the ground rules (as specified above); thus ensuring they treat others with respect, dignity and sensitivity.

Parents/Carers

All parents and nominated care-givers are informed about the school's PSHE programme by letter at the start of the academic year. They are advised on where to access the RSE local procedure and are invited to feedback directly to the school; participating with surveys and questionnaires as part of our consultation process.

6. Right to Withdraw

Sketchley Hall

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE. Students are not able to be withdrawn from the 'Health Education' topics within the new curriculum. Requests for withdrawal (appendix 1) should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher for consideration. In the event that a withdrawal request is sanctioned by the Headteacher, alternative work will be given to learners who are withdrawn from any relevant aspects of sex education.

Forest House

Parents have the right to withdraw their child from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wished to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. Students are not able to be withdrawn from the 'Health Education' topics within the new curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher.

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Headteacher will discuss the request with the parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

7. Visitors

As part of the RSE educational package, outside visitors may be invited to deliver appropriate sessions to learners on a range of topics.

All visitors are subject to our Child Protection and Safeguarding policies and procedures and the credentials of visiting organisations and any visitors linked to external agencies are always checked. The school also ensures that the teaching delivered by visitors fits with the planned programme of study. The content of lessons provided by external agencies is age- and stage-appropriate and accessible for all learners. All content planned to be taught or delivered is approved by the school in advance of delivery.

As with all RSE lessons, Sketchley School will ensure that guest speakers/visitors are aware of the confidentiality and safeguarding local procedure. Any matters reported by visitors to the lead teacher for the lesson/session will be dealt with in line with the school's Safeguarding Local procedure

9. References

The RSE local procedure at Sketchley School is informed by the following DfE guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education;
- Respectful School Communities;
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools;
- Equalities Act 2010;
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years;
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools;
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying, including cyberbullying;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools;
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance;
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools.

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

Local Procedure Review History:

Date Reviewed	Reviewer	Summary of revisions
20/01/2024	Megan Elliott	Local procedure created
08/01/2025	Megan Surrige (nee Elliott)	Local procedure reviewed and updated
27/03/2025	Megan Surrige (nee Elliott)	Local procedure reviewed and updated
23/09/2025	Daniel Showler	Local procedure reviewed and updated

Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

Education And Children's Services: Local Procedure

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	Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken.		