Pope Francis
Catholic Multi Academy Trust

RSHE Policy 2026-2027

Approved by:	Mrs C McKenna (Acting Headteacher)	**Date:** 14th September 2024
Last reviewed on:	24th September 2026	
Next review due by:	01/09/2027	

1. Policy context and rationale

1.1 This policy sets out the intent and planned implementation of relationships, sex and health education at Saint Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic Academy.

1.2 Stemming from our mission statement of every pupil at SEACA experiencing 'life in all its fullness', we seek to educate the whole person; spiritually, morally, emotionally, psychologically and physically towards Christian maturity. Through our RSHE curriculum we seek to equip our pupils with the knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. We also seek to develop our pupils' capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks and challenges and to support our pupils to develop resilience, to know how and when to ask for help, and to know how to access support.

1.3 We define relationships and sex education as learning about healthy, nurturing and respectful relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It is also about the teaching of the physical, emotional, social, moral and legal dimensions of sex, sexuality and sexual health. Effective relationships and sex education does not encourage or promote early sexual activity.

1.4 We define health education as pupils learning about how to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves to protect and support their own physical, mental, social, spiritual and reproductive health and wellbeing.

2. Legislation

2.1 This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- • DfE (2025) *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory Guidance* (effective from 1 September 2026).
  • DfE (2024) *Keeping Children Safe in Education*.
  • Online Safety Act 2023.
  • Equality Act 2010.
- Catholic Education Service model secondary RSE curriculum (2019)
- DfE (2015) 'National curriculum in England: Science programmes of study'
- Children and Social Work Act 2017

2.2 The school also keeps abreast of all developments in Catholic Social Teaching.

3. Aims

3.1 This policy is informed and underpinned by the Saint Edmund Arrowsmith mission statement of 'life in all its fullness' and the academy values of love, inspiration, empowerment and joy. The relationships, sex and health education curriculum seeks to educate pupils about relationships, sex and health in the context of the Catholic faith.

3.2 Our RSHE curriculum has the following aims:

3.2.1 Relationships Education - pupils are supported to stay safe. They know the indicators of healthy and unhealthy relationships and understand key concepts such as respect, permission-seeking and giving, appropriate and inappropriate contact, kindness and commitment.

3.2.2 Sex Education – pupils have the knowledge to be well prepared for changes in adolescence and for safe, healthy and fulfilling relationships. Pupils are taught about choices over aspects such as contraception and pregnancy. Pupils have knowledge of the law and harmful sexual behaviours, including coercion, harassment, abuse and violence.

3.2.3 Physical Health and Mental Wellbeing – pupils have knowledge about healthy eating, physical health/fitness, facts about and the risks of drugs, alcohol and tobacco, so that they are empowered to make good decisions about their physical health. Pupils have basic first aid skills. Pupils know how to recognise and manage their own mental well-being and are aware of where and how to seek support.

3.2.4 Woven into all of the above, it is a key aim of the RSHE curriculum at SEACA that pupils are taught about how to keep themselves and other safe, including online, (KCSIE 2024, para 128).

3.2.5 Online Safety and Digital Citizenship – pupils will develop the knowledge and skills required to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly. Pupils will learn about online relationships, social media, artificial intelligence, misinformation, online exploitation, pornography, cyberbullying, online gambling, financial scams and the safe management of personal data.

4. Curriculum delivery

4.1 Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) is a whole school responsibility and will be taught across both the Personal Development curriculum, the subject curriculum and promoted by all staff.

4.2 Important topics within RSHE will be delivered through Personal Development lessons. One lesson per fortnight is dedicated to Personal Development where students will cover Relationships, Sex and Health Education. The Ten:Ten 'Life to the Full' programme of study and resources underpin these Personal Development lessons to ensure that at SEACA we teach RSHE within the context of a Christian understanding of human sexuality rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church. The framework of the 'Life to the Full' programme is taken from the model Catholic RSE programme by the Catholic Education Service.

4.3 In addition to Personal Development lessons, pupils will also be taught about RSHE across the subject curriculum across a number of different curriculum areas. These curriculum areas include, but are not limited to, RE, Science, Technology, PE and ICT.

4.4 A comprehensive audit is in place which clearly shows where the different elements of RSHE are taught both explicitly and implicitly across both the Personal Development and the subject curriculum.

This audit will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

4.5 The wider curriculum and pastoral structure also supports the delivery of RSHE through the use of assemblies, form time and drop down sessions where appropriate.

4.6 The RSHE curriculum will be informed by meaningful pupil voice activities to ensure that learning is relevant, age-appropriate and responsive to the lived experiences and needs of pupils.

4.7 Parents will be provided with opportunities to review curriculum content and teaching materials in line with DfE expectations regarding transparency and engagement with families.

4.8 RSHE will be delivered through a whole-school approach and will complement the academy's safeguarding, behaviour, anti-bullying, online safety and attendance strategies.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1

Leaders are responsible for:	Teachers are responsible for:	The governing body are responsible for:
• Ensuring that that the RSHE curriculum is coherent planned and appropriately sequenced to meet pupil needs in an age appropriate way. • Ensuring that the RSHE curriculum is implemented consistently across the academy. • Managing requests to withdraw pupils from the non-statutory components of sex education. • Ensuring that the statutory requirements of RSHE are met in full.	• Establishing ground rules with their form group, upholding and revisiting these regularly to ensure pupils feel comfortable and confident in RSHE lessons. • Modelling positive attitudes to the RSHE curriculum. • Responding to the needs of individual pupils, including those with SEND. • Maintaining up to date knowledge of the core RSHE content and concepts and communicating with the CL for Personal Development if they have a specific training/support need.	• Approving the RSHE policy and holding leaders to account for its implementation. • Reviewing the RSHE policy on an annual basis.

5.2 Members of staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Members of staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

6. Staff Training

6.1 Members of staff will be given the opportunity to take part in an annual self-assessment which will identify perceptions, knowledge, confidence and training needs. Staff will then have access to high-quality training which reflects the findings from this. CPD time will be utilised to provide colleagues with the opportunity to review resources, pre-empt difficult questions and misconceptions and access support from the AHT for Personal Development and external sources, where appropriate.

6.2 Where appropriate, use will be made of the Department for Education RSHE teacher training modules highlighted in KCSIE 2024 (para 131), which can be found here.

6.3 Staff who teach RSHE will additional training to ensure delivery meets both statutory and diocesan requirements, utilising the Ten:Ten CPD materials and through completion of the online Catholic Education Service RSHE training course.

7. Equality of Opportunity

7.1 It is important that all pupils gain an understanding of the world they are growing up in, and learn how to live alongside, and show respect for, a diverse range of people. At SEACA we seek to equip our pupils to do this. At SEACA we are committed to following the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010. Under the Equality Act, we educate our pupils not to discriminate against the 9 protected characteristics. These are:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- marriage and civil partnership
- race
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy and maternity

7.2 We use our Personal Development curriculum, Collective Worship and Assembly programme as the main vehicle for teaching about and upholding the protected characteristics, including LGBTQ+ relationships.

7.3 At SEACA pupils with SEND follow the same RSHE curriculum as all other pupils. At all times, we will bear in mind the needs of pupils with SEND and adaptive teaching strategies will be utilised by all teachers to differentiate and ensure equitable curriculum access for all pupils.

8. Arrangements for Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting the Effectiveness of the Curriculum

8.1 The delivery of RSHE is monitored by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Personal Development through learning walks, pupil voice, staff voice and quality assurance of resources.

8.2 Pupil knowledge and understanding of key concepts and themes across the RSHE curriculum will be assessed through the use of teacher questioning, regular pupil self-reflection against clear success criteria and through pupil voice. Pastoral and safeguarding records will also be monitored for patterns and trends and as such, used to monitor the impact of the RSHE curriculum and refine the planned RSHE curriculum where necessary.

8.3 This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for Personal Development and will be monitored annually by the Governing Body. Parents/carers will be consulted with on an annual basis if any changes or adaptations are proposed.

8.4 The Archdiocese of Liverpool is also part of the monitoring and evaluation process and will be consulted with on an annual basis if any changes or adaptations are proposed, with on-going regular access to the Catholic Education Service website being utilised to support the development of the policy and implementation.

8.5 The curriculum will be reviewed annually against emerging safeguarding themes, local contextual safeguarding data, pupil voice findings and updates to statutory guidance to ensure

content remains relevant and responsive to pupils' needs.

9. The role of Parents

9.1 At Saint Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic Academy we recognise the principle that parents are the first educators of their children and we are committed to working with parents and the clergy. The Church has always recognised that it is the privilege and the responsibility of parents to educate and inform their children in all matters pertaining to personal growth and development, particularly in the sensitive areas of moral education and sexual development.

9.2 The Church also recognises that many parents require help and support in this task from both schools and parishes. At SEACA, parents will be consulted and kept informed of the RSHE programme including its contents, review and any subsequent developments. Parents are invited to contact the school directly with any queries or concerns.

10. Right of Withdrawal

10.1 It is our hope that parents would wish their children to be involved in the academy's positive and prudent programme of Relationships, Sex and Health Education, following annual consultation regarding the academy's approach. However, we recognise parents have the right to withdraw their children 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 wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. However, there is no right to withdraw from Relationship Education or Health Education (DfE RSHE Statutory Guidance 2020, Page 18).

10.2 Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The Headteacher or an appropriate designated person will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

10.3 If a parent or carer requests that their child be removed from the non-statutory components of sex education, the academy will provide support by ensuring the child understands that if they have questions they may still speak with a member of staff directly.

10.4 If a pupil is withdrawn from the non-statutory components of sex education, SEACA will ensure that the pupil receives appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

Appendix 1 – RSHE curriculum content at SEACA.

Families - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.

- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.
- how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.

Respectful relationships - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships.

- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
- how misogyny, sexism and harmful gender stereotypes can negatively affect individuals, relationships and wider society.
- how online influencers, social media platforms and online communities can shape attitudes towards relationships and gender.
- how to challenge discriminatory, abusive or harmful attitudes safely and appropriately.

Online and the media - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.
- about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online.
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.

- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.
- the impact of viewing harmful content.
- how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to generate content online, and how to critically evaluate the reliability and accuracy of AI-generated information.
- about deepfakes, manipulated images and misinformation.
- how algorithms influence content that appears online.
- how online gambling, scams and financial exploitation can target young people.

- that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners.
- that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being safe - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships.
- how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
- awareness of risks associated with knife crime and exploitation.
- strategies for de-escalation, conflict resolution and seeking support.
- how to identify coercive, controlling and abusive behaviours within relationships and friendship groups.

Intimate and sexual relationships - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing.
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help).
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing.
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.

- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
- the impact of pornography and sexually explicit online content on expectations, attitudes and relationships.
- how unhealthy portrayals of sex and relationships can contribute to coercion, exploitation and abuse.
- strategies for recognising and resisting sexual pressure.
- how to access support and healthcare services relating to sexual and reproductive health.

Mental wellbeing - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others.
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.
- common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).
- how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health.
- the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
- the impact of social media and excessive screen use on wellbeing.
- grief, bereavement and loss.
- strategies to build resilience, emotional regulation and positive self-worth

Internet safety and harms - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.
- how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours.

Physical health and fitness - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.
- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health.
- about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions.
- the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.

- the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.

- the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.
- awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.
- the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.

Health and prevention - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.
- (late secondary) • the benefits of regular self-examination and participation in age-appropriate screening programmes.
- awareness of menstrual and gynaecological health conditions, including endometriosis, PCOS and menopause.
- how and when to access appropriate healthcare services and support.
- the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.

Basic first aid - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- basic treatment for common injuries.
- life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.
- the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.

Changing adolescent body - by the end of secondary school pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.
- the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

Openness with parents

- Parents have the right to request access to RSHE teaching materials and resources used by the academy. Requests should be made through the Assistant Headteacher for Personal Development. The academy will ensure that curriculum content, resources and any significant curriculum changes are shared openly with parents.