



Essa Academy Health and Relationships  
Education Policy

**Date of Issue:** July 2021

**Next Review Date:** August 2022

## Policy Cover Note

Title of the Policy	Essa Academy Sex and Relationships Education Policy
Summary/Reason for bringing to Board for Approval	A policy outlining the procedures of Health and Relationships that is taught within the school.
Statutory Requirement	Yes
Decisions to be made / recommendation on options	It is recommended that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The board approves the policy for adoption by each LGB</li><li>• Delegates minor changes to the CEO</li><li>• Agrees to review the policy</li></ul>
Name of the author	Lucy Gallagher
Date written	July 2021
Date for Review	August 2022
Policy/Procedure to be published on the trust website	Yes
Policy/procedure to be published on the Academy/Primary website	Yes
Amendments/Updates	Statutory guidance changes

# Education Policy (Essa Academy)

## **Introduction**

This policy is in conjunction with The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 which are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. To give effect to the duty in section 34 of the 2017 Act and the power in section 35 of that Act, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 amend existing provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 2002 and insert new provisions into the education of young people. The new provisions include a requirement for the Secretary of State to publish guidance on Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education; require schools to have regard to that guidance; require schools to make a statement of policy on their provision of Relationships Education and RSE; and set out the circumstances in which a student is to be excused from RSE.

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. At Essa Foundations Academy Trust (EFAT), children will be educated to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

Relationships and Health Education is now compulsory in both primary and secondary schools. Our guiding principles at ESSA are that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It will be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of students and parents, while always with the aim of providing students with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. ESSA complements and reinforces this role and have made it clear that they see building on what students learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education. All teachers within ESSA teach aspects of relationships and sex education and, this takes place at various times throughout the academic year.

## **Government guidance**

This policy runs alongside the statutory guidance from the Department of Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996. The new government guidance, which will be implemented at ESSA as part of the Early Adopter scheme and will replace the Sex and Relationship Education guidance (2000), and will be reviewed every three years from 2020.

The guidance should be read in conjunction with:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (statutory guidance)
- Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool (a tool to support a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools (advice for schools, including advice for appropriate behaviour between students)
- Equality Act 2010 and EFAT's Safeguarding Policy
- SEND code of practice: 0 to 25 years (statutory guidance)

- Alternative Provision (statutory guidance)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (advice for schools)
- Preventing and Tackling Bullying (advice for schools, including advice on cyberbullying)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools (advice for schools)
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission Advice and Guidance (provides advice on avoiding discrimination in a variety of educational contexts)
- Promoting Fundamental British Values as part of SMSC in schools (guidance for maintained schools on promoting basic important British values as part of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural) (SMSC education)
- SMSC requirements for independent schools (guidance for independent schools on how they should support students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)
- National Citizen Service guidance for schools

### **Content of the course**

- ESSA teaches a range of topics within PSHE and Relationships, Health and Sex Education topics in form and curriculum time. Teaching about mental and physical wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. Young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The PSHEE/ RSE curriculum will help to foster student wellbeing and develop resilience and character are fundamental to students being happy, successful and productive members of society. The PSHEE/ RSE curriculum also includes curriculum content on financial education and careers.
- In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, ESSA ensures that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must ensure that they comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics. ESSA ensures that all of their teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. ESSA considers when it is appropriate to teach the students about LGBTQ and same-sex relationships and ensures that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum, which is planned by the PSHEE Lead (Lucy Gallagher). Sexual orientation and gender identity will be explored in the Relationships aspect of the curriculum at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner. This will be integrated appropriately into the RSE programme, rather than addressed separately or in only one lesson. The government guidance expects all students to have been taught LGBTQ content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum.
- In teaching Sex Education, students at ESSA will be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, and sexual health in an age-appropriate and inclusive way.
- Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, will also be addressed sensitively and clearly. ESSA addresses the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). Students will also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, students may also

need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for themselves or others at risk.

- ESSA will also be mindful that for students who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, ESSA may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety, where students can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.
- ESSA will also incorporate internet safety into the curriculum. Students will be taught the rules and principles for keeping safe online. This will include how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how and to whom to report issues. Students will have a strong understanding of how data is generated, collected, shared and used online: for example, how personal data is captured on social media; or understanding the way that businesses may exploit the data available to them.
- Some students are also exposed to harmful behaviours online and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.
- The onset of menstruation can be confusing or even alarming for girls if they are not prepared. Students will be taught key facts about the menstrual cycle, including what is an average period, the range of menstrual products and the implications for emotional and physical health. In addition to curriculum content, ESSA has also made adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls prepare for and manage menstruation, including requests for menstrual products which are available from Reception, Ivy Cottage or with the PSHEE Lead (Lucy Gallagher).

Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. At ESSA it teaches young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports young people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

Knowledge about safer sex and sexual health remains important, to ensure that young people are equipped to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life. This will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way and will allow scope for young people to ask questions in a safe environment.

### **National Curriculum subjects: Citizenship, Science, Computing and PE**

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education complement several national curriculum subjects. ESSA has designed the PSHE and Relationships, Health and Sex Education for opportunities to draw links between the subjects and to integrate teaching where appropriate. There continues to be no right of withdrawal from any part of the national curriculum. Relationships Education (and RSE) creates an opportunity to enable students to be taught about positive emotional, physical and mental wellbeing, including how friendships can support mental wellbeing. The Secondary Relationships curriculum will be underpinned by a wider, deliberate cultivation and practice of resilience and character in the individual.

- The National Curriculum for Citizenship at key stages 3 and 4 aims to provide students with knowledge, skills and understanding to prepare them to play a full and active part in society. In particular, citizenship education should foster students' awareness and understanding of democracy, government and how laws are made and upheld. EFAT's curriculum equips students with the knowledge to explore political and social issues, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments. It should also prepare students to take their place in society as responsible citizens, manage their money well and make sound financial decisions.
- The national curriculum for computing aims to ensure that all students can understand and apply the fundamental principles and concepts of computer science, including logic, algorithms and data representation. It also covers e-safety, with progression in the content to reflect the different and escalating risks that young people face as they get older. This includes how to use technology safely, responsibly, respectfully and securely; how to keep personal information private; and where to go for help and support.
- The national curriculum for PE aims to ensure that students develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities; are physically active for sustained periods of time; engage in competitive sport and activities; and lead healthy, active lives. Health education can complement what is taught through PE by developing core knowledge and broader understanding that enables people to lead healthy, active lives and citizenship can complement all of the national curriculum subjects.
  - **Physical health and mental wellbeing:**  
It is important for students ESSA to have a starting point for health and wellbeing education, this will be a focus enabling students to make well-informed, positive choices for themselves. Lessons will be designed to aid in the understanding of their bodies are changing, how they are feeling and why, to further develop their language that they use to talk about their bodies, health and emotions and to understand why terms associated with mental and physical health difficulties should not be used pejoratively.
  - At Essa there will be an emphasis on how students can take steps to protect and support their own health and wellbeing. Students should know there is a relationship between good physical health and good physical and mental wellbeing and that this can also influence their ability to learn. The ESSA curriculum will cover self-care, the benefits of physical activity and time spent outdoors. This will be linked to information on the benefits of sufficient sleep, good nutrition and strategies for building resilience.
  - Students will discuss and know the contribution that hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities can make to overall wellbeing. Students will understand that humans are social beings and that outward-facing activity, especially that with a service focus (for example, work, volunteering and participation in organisations such as the Scouts or Girl Guiding organisations, the National Citizen Service or the Duke of Edinburgh Award) are beneficial for wellbeing. This can also contribute to the development of the attributes for a happy and successful adult life. This will ensure students who are self-focused or isolated make informed choices that can lead to happiness, companionship and relationships.

**By the end of secondary school students should be able to:**

<b>Families</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.</li><li>• how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.</li><li>• the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.</li><li>• the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting.</li><li>• 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.</li></ul>
<b>Respectful relationships, including friendships</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 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. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</li><li>• practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.</li><li>• 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).</li><li>• 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.</li><li>• about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help.</li><li>• that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.</li><li>• what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.</li></ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul>
<b>Online and media</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them.</li> <li>what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online.</li> <li>the impact of viewing harmful content.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</li> <li>how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.</li> </ul>
<b>Being safe</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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).</li> </ul>
<b>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</b>	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> <li>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.</li> <li>the facts about reproductive health, including fertility, and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause.</li> <li>that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex.</li> <li>• the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available.</li> <li>• the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.</li> <li>• 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).</li> <li>• 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.</li> <li>• about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment.</li> <li>• how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour.</li> <li>• how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.</li> </ul>
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**Time plan for PSHEE/ RSE in the curriculum:**

What does it mean to be British?	Puberty	Personal Safety	Prejudice and discrimination	Financial and ethical decisions	Mental and physical wellbeing
What is wellbeing?	Being a teenager	What does it mean to be a good citizen?	Drugs education	The influence of role models	Finance
Citizenship	Drugs, alcohol and vulnerable situations	Relationships, Health and Sex Education	Mental Health and wellbeing	The media	India/ Pakistan divides (Viceroy's House)
Medical ethics	Drugs and alcohol education	Relationships, Health and Sex Education	RS Climate change/ stewardship	Ancient Greek mythology	RS/ Music/ PSHEE cross-curricular - 1950s America
Citizenship and the law	RS Atheism/ New Religious Movements	Faith vs Culture	Mental health and wellbeing		

**The Law**

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This part of the curriculum will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people, and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions. Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including ‘sexting’, youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism/radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or ‘county lines’ drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

### **Right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Following the guidance from the Department for Education, a parent/ carer has the right to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive Relationships and Health Education, they can receive the curriculum planned lessons.

If a student is excused from sex education, it is the parent’s responsibility to ensure they attend a compulsory informative event at the Academy in order to withdraw their child. This event will include information regarding the curriculum, what parent/ carers will be removing their child from. A parent/ carer will not be able to excuse their child if they do not attend the event. If a parent/ carer is unable to attend the event, they may book an appointment/ meeting with PSHE Lead (LSG) for a one-to-one discussion.

### **Topics:**

<b><u>Relationships Education</u></b>	<b><u>Health Education</u></b>	<b><u>Sex Education (Right to withdraw)</u></b>
Online safety	Drugs education	Sexually Transmitted Infections/ Diseases
Sexual relationships including same-sex relationships	Alcohol education	Contraception
Friendships	Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)	

Peer pressure	Puberty including personal hygiene and the menstrual cycle
Mutual respect	Wellbeing (self-esteem, self-confidence, mindfulness, personal safety, sleep and stress)
Safe relationships	Mental Health (Social and emotional wellbeing)
Domestic violence/ coercive behaviour	Body Image
Consent	Men's health
The media	Healthy lifestyles

### **Religion and belief systems**

At EFAT, the religious background of all students will be considered when planning teaching, so that the topics that are included in the core content are appropriately handled. This will comply with the relevant provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion or belief are amongst the protected characteristics. ESSA is a non-faith organisation and therefore will not teach topics from the PSHEE or the Relationship and Health Education from any faith perspective.

### **Student with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)**

Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education must be accessible for all pupils. This is particularly important at ESSA when planning teaching for students with special educational needs and disabilities who represent a large minority of pupils. At ESSA there will be quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility. This will be in line with preparing for adulthood outcomes, as set out in the SEND code of practice, when teaching these subjects to those with SEND.

At ESSA we are aware that some students are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships Education and RSE is an integral part of the curriculum with particularly important subjects for some students; for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities. Such factors should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. As with all teaching for these subjects, ESSA will ensure that our teaching is sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

### **Safeguarding and confidentiality**

At the heart of the subjects we teach at ESSA there is a focus on keeping children safe, and schools can play an important role in preventative education. Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) sets out that all schools and colleges should ensure children are taught about safeguarding, including how to stay safe online, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum.

The good practice at ESSA allows students an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. Such discussions can lead to increased safeguarding reports. Students are made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report and how any report will be handled. This should include processes when they have a concern about a friend or peer. This is in line with the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy at EFAT.

ESSA will invite external agencies in to support delivery of RSE, the agencies as per our Safeguarding Policy written by the Designated Safeguarding Lead DSL (Stacey O'Connor). External agencies will agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding report should be dealt with by the external visitor. It is important that children understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what will happen if they choose to make a report.

Whilst there is no formal examined assessment for these subjects, there are some areas to consider in strengthening quality of provision, and which demonstrate how teachers can assess outcomes. Learning walks will take place in both form time and curriculum lessons which offer Quality First Teaching to ensure suitability and engagement of students.

At EFAT, teachers delivering RSE sessions will acknowledge and understand how they approach specific content and how they consider their planning. When teaching the new subjects, ESSA will be aware that children may raise topics including self-harm and suicide. In talking about this content, teachers will be aware of the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable option for students and must avoid material being instructive rather than preventative. To avoid this, teachers will avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and avoid using emotive language, videos or images.

### **Regulations for Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education**

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 are made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, and provide that pupils receiving primary education must be taught Relationships Education, pupils receiving secondary education must be taught RSE and that all primary and secondary pupils must be taught Health Education. The new subjects of Relationships Education and RSE must be taught in all maintained schools, academies and independent schools. This includes pupil referral units, maintained special schools, special academies, and non-maintained special schools. All schools, except independent schools, must make provision for Health Education.

To give effect to the duty in section 34 of the 2017 Act and the power in section 35 of that Act, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 amend existing provisions in the Education Act 1996 and the Education Act 2002 and insert new provisions into the Education (Pupil Referral Units) (Application of Enactments) (England) Regulations 2007, the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and the Non-Maintained Special Schools (England) Regulations 2015. The new provisions include a requirement for the Secretary of State to publish guidance on Relationships Education, RSE, and Health Education; require schools to have regard to that guidance; require schools to make a statement of policy on their provision of Relationships Education and RSE; and set out the circumstances in which a pupil is to be excused from RSE.

The regulations and guidance in relation to Health Education do not apply to independent schools – they will continue to make provision for the health education element of PSHE under the Education (Independent

School Standards) Regulations 2014.