TENAX SCHOOLS TRUST

Excellence together; transformative education for every child.

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Approval Arrangements

All policies in the Trust are ultimately the responsibility of the Trust Board. To enable it to discharge this responsibility appropriately and in collaboration with the constituent schools, the Trust Board will

1. set a full Trust wide policy which applies in the same way to all schools,
2. require individual schools to 1 - adopt, 2 - amend or 3 - adapt policies set by the Trust

This is a level 1 policy against the Scheme of Delegation and supersedes any previous version.

Approval Body:	**Board of Trustees**
Amended/adapted by:	**Headteacher**
Date Approved:	**16/09/2026**
Author:	**Director of Education**
Next review:	**September 2027**
Review period:	**1 year**
Version:	**1.0**

Policy Approval

All TST policies are Board approved.

Some policies are uniform in their application, regardless of school context. For example, those relating to finance and people matters. These are adopted policies.

Some policies are for school-level amendments. For example, where key school staff need to be named within policies. Heads are responsible for amended policies.

We have a few Board-approved policies that are for schools to adapt. The policies set the framework, but schools need to adapt them for their context. Heads are responsible for adapted policies.

Trust Vision

Our policies support us in living our values and delivering our vision. A full statement of our vison and values and the Christian theological roots of our vision can be found on our website here.

We recognise that all stakeholders will hold a wide range of beliefs and values, and that views are deeply held. Teaching will always be inclusive, respectful and non-judgemental. Our schools will ensure that all pupils are equipped with accurate knowledge whilst also understanding that people with different faiths and beliefs, including those with none, may approach relationships and family life in different ways.

Policy Aim

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) in our Trust are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare children/young people for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene, and teach the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Help Pupils/Students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy, and to cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships

Legislation and Guidance

In our primary academies, we must provide relationships education to all Pupils/Students as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This legislation also requires us to provide RSE to all Pupils/ students at our secondary academy.

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum, but we are expected to offer all Pupils/Students a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science. This would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum at primary level.

In teaching RSE, we're required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

We also have regard to legal duties set out in:

- Sections 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the Equality Act 2010
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At Tenax we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Consultation

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff and parents/carers. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a working group of staff collated all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff/Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents/carers and any interested parties were invited to respond to a consultation about the policy
3. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with the Board of Trustees for ratification

Definition and Purpose

For the purpose of this policy:

RSE is defined as about the emotional, social and cultural development of Pupils/Students, 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.

Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out in the appendices, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents and carers, and staff, and considering the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils/students. If pupils/students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils/students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share any curriculum resources and materials with parents and carers on request.

Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

The Trust will make sure that:

- core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size;
- the required content is communicated to pupils/students clearly, in a carefully sequenced way and within a planned scheme of work;
- teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils/students to embed new knowledge, so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations;

Across our primary schools' relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- families and people who care for me;
- caring friendships;
- respectful, kind relationships;
- online safety and awareness;
- being safe.

Primary sex education will focus on:

- preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings;
- how a baby is conceived and born.

Throughout each year group we will use material to assist learning, such as:

- diagrams;
- videos;
- books;
- discussions and practical activities.

Teachers will make sure that all pupils'/students' views are listened to and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the ages of the pupils/students.

The Trust will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils/students including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The working group reviewed a range of schemes being used nationally, and found and selected KAPOW for primary schools because of its strong sequencing of knowledge at age-appropriate points, high-quality resources and careful consideration of supporting teachers' workload.

At key points of delivery of the curriculum, the school will consult parents and carers, and their views will be valued. Parents and carers can request to view teaching materials at any point, and an up-to-date copy of the RSE policy and curriculum map will always be available on the school website.

For more information about our RSE curriculum progression, see appendices.

In our secondary schools

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, including:

- families;

- respectful relationships, including friendships;
- online safety and awareness;
- being safe;
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health.

RSE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching. The RSE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

Teachers will make sure that pupils/students understand the importance of equality and respect, and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education.

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate materials to assist learning, such as:

- diagrams;
- videos;
- books;
- discussions and practical activities.

Teachers will make sure that all pupils'/students' views are listened to, and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly, and appropriately for the ages of the pupils/students.

The schools will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils/students including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

The secondary school curriculum has been developed in a bespoke way to meet the needs of pupils/students. At key points of delivery of the curriculum, the school will consult parents and carers, and their views will be valued. Parents and carers can request to view teaching materials at any point, and an up-to-date copy of the RSE policy and curriculum map will always be available on the school website.

It is important for secondary pupils/students to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils/students identify what is right and wrong and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships;
- consent, including the age of consent;
- domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty;
- sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour, and online behaviours;
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils/Students should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion.
- pornography;
- abortion;

- protected characteristics;
- the age of criminal responsibility.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices.

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils/students, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance and share any relevant materials on request.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, and foster parents/carers among other structures) along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).

Across our Trust, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

Including and belonging

Our schools will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- considers how a diverse range of pupil /students will relate to them;
- is sensitive to all pupils'/students' experiences;
- during lessons, makes pupils/students feel:
  - safe and supported;
  - able to engage with the key messages.

They will also:

- make sure that pupils/students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
  - a whole-class setting;
  - small groups or targeted sessions;
  - 1-to-1 discussions;
  - digital formats.
- give careful consideration to the level of adaptation needed.

Resourcing

Our schools will consider whether any resources they plan to use:

- are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance;
- would support pupils/students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings;
- are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils/students;
- are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics;
- fit into our curriculum plan;

- are from credible sources;
- are compatible with effective teaching approaches;
- are sensitive to pupils'/students' experiences and won't provoke distress.

Use of external resources

Across our Trust, we will make sure that any agency and any materials used are accurate, appropriate and unbiased and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

Our schools **will**:

- make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
    - are age-appropriate;
- are in line with pupils'/student's developmental stage;
    - comply with:
        - this policy;
        - the Teachers' Standards;
        - the Equality Act 2010;
        - the Human Rights Act 1998;
        - the Education Act 1996;
- only work with external agencies where they have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses;
- make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum;
- review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with;
- be clear ahead of time on:
    - what they're going to say;
    - their position on the issues to be discussed.
- ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use;
- know the named individuals who will be there, and follow usual safeguarding procedures for these people;
- conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to the school, or to parents and carers;
- check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session;
- remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session;
- make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers;
- inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers;

- share all external materials with parents and carers.

Our schools **will not**, under any circumstances:

- work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions;
- use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme;
- work with agencies who don't allow their material to be shared with parents and carers.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteachers to account for its implementation. The board will ensure that the policy reflects the Trust's Christian theological roots, its vision and values.

Central Education Staff

Will work with headteachers to make sure they can implement the policy in their school, and report to the Board of Trustees on any issues with its implementation across the Trust.

Local committees

Local committees are responsible for supporting the implementation of the policy at their school and reporting issues to the Board of Trustees when they occur.

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for making sure that RSE is taught consistently across their school, for making sure that all resources and materials are shared with parents and carers, and for managing requests to withdraw pupils/students from non- statutory components of RSE.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- delivering RSE in a way that is sensitive, high-quality and appropriate for each year group;
- modelling positive attitudes to RSE;
- monitoring progress in lessons;
- responding to the needs of individual pupils/students;
- responding appropriately to pupils/students whose parents/carers wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE;
- modelling positive behaviour and avoiding language that might perpetuate harmful stereotypes, and being conscious of everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes;
- reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils/students may make as a result of the subject content to the school's designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

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 the headteacher.

Named staff members in each school who are responsible for RSE can be found on each school's website.

Pupils/Students

Pupils/students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

Parents' right to withdraw

In our primary schools' parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in the Appendix of this policy and addressed to the headteacher of the school.

The Headteacher will arrange to meet with parents (or the Headteacher delegate) once the written request has been received.

Alternative work will be given to pupils /students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Across our secondary academies, parents/carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until three terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in the Appendix of this policy and addressed to the headteacher of the school.

The Headteacher will arrange to meet with parents (or the Headteacher delegate) once the written request has been received.

A copy of any withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a pupil's specific vulnerability, the headteacher can refuse a request to withdraw the pupil from sex education.

The Trust Safeguarding Lead will monitor the level of RSE withdrawal across the Trust.

Alternative work will be given to pupils/students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

Monitoring:

The delivery of RSE is monitored by The Trust Safeguarding Lead and the Director of Education through:

- annual Safeguarding reviews in all schools across the Trust;
- pupils'/Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems;
- reviewing information on withdrawal;
- updating staff and parents as government requirements change;

- consulting on any policy changes as required.

Primary Schools Curriculum Overview

RSE & PSHE

Suggested long-term plan: RSE & PSHE

Overview (All year groups)

	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
EYFS	Self regulation: My feelings	Building relationships: Special relationships	Managing self: Taking on challenges	Self-regulation: Listening and following instructions	Building relationships: My family and friends	Managing self: My wellbeing
Year 1	My healthy self: How can we look after our emotions?	Connecting with others: How can I help myself and others feel happy and safe?	The online world: How do we spend time online?	Citizenship: How can I help others and the environment?	Health protection: How can I protect myself and others in daily life?	Staying safe: How can I stay safe?
Year 2	My healthy self: How can we look after our bodies?	Connecting with others: How can I build safe, kind and caring relationships with others?	The online world: How can we stay safe online?	Citizenship: How do people belong to a community and earn money?	Growing up: How can we look after and respect our bodies as we grow?	**Coming 21 July 2026** Staying safe: How can I make safe choices in different places?
Year 3	My healthy self: How can I take care of my mind and body?	Connecting with others: What helps us feel safe and included?	The online world: How should we communicate online?	Citizenship: What rights and responsibilities do we have?	**Coming 21 September 2026** Health protection: How can we prevent illness and injury and respond if they happen?	Citizenship: What careers do people choose and why?
Year 4	My healthy self: How can I make healthy choices?	Connecting with others: How can we respect each other?	The online world: How can we decide what to trust online?	Citizenship: How can I spend money wisely?	Growing up: How will my body and emotions change as I grow up?	Staying safe: What signs help me recognise what is safe or unsafe?
Year 5	My healthy self: How can I support my mind and body as I grow?	Connecting with others: Why are healthy relationships important?	The online world: How am I influenced by what I see online?	Citizenship: How can we make a difference in our communities and beyond?	Growing up: How can I manage the changes to my body and emotions as I grow up?	Citizenship: How can we be in control of our money?
Year 6	My healthy self: How do my choices today shape my future health?	Connecting with others: What does it mean to stand up for myself and others?	Online world: How do I feel about the things I see online?	Citizenship: How can we protect everyone's rights?	Staying safe: How can I stay safe as I grow up?	Sex education: How do people become parents and carers?

Secondary Curriculum overview

PACE Curriculum September 2026

Curriculum overview		
Year	**Term**	**Unit of work**
7	1	Mental well-being & Respectful relationships • Emotions • Happiness & loneliness • Worries • Anxiety • Characteristics of positive relationships • Self esteem
	2	Relationships • Marriage and civil partnership • Laws relating to marriage • Changing relationships • Roles and responsibilities of families • Safe and unsafe relationships • Friendship • Bullying • Ending relationships
	3	Developing bodies and health • Puberty • Reproduction * • Personal hygiene • Dental health • Sleep
	4	Developing bodies and health • Healthy eating • Physical activity • Healthy lifestyles • Basic 1st aid
	5	Online safety • Rights and responsibilities online • Online risks • Harmful behaviours online • Trustworthy sources
	6	Personal safety • Recognise and manage peer influence • Responsible decision making • Recognise and manage peer pressure • Risks related to online gambling within gaming
		* May request to be withdrawn from these lessons.

PACE Curriculum September 2026

Curriculum overview		
Year	Term	Unit of work
8	1&2	Harmful substances • Facts about drugs • Laws on illegal drugs • Misuse of prescribed and over the counter drugs • Alcohol and alcohol dependency • Tobacco • Vaping • Harmful substances and mental health • Grooming and exploitation

	3&4	Tolerance
		• Legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality
		• Evaluate the Impact they have on others
		• Impact of stereotypes on the following protected characteristics;
		  ○ Biological Sex
		  ○ Gender reassignment
		  ○ Race
		  ○ Religion
		  ○ Sexual orientation
		  ○ disability
		• Introduction to Misogyny

	5	Respectful relationships and online safety • Characteristics of a positive relationship • Understand boundaries, consent and privacy • Manage conflict reconciliation and ending relationships • Characteristics of social media including information about fake accounts • The influence of social media and that it can amplify extremes views and profiles. • Keeping personal information safe online.

	6	Personal safety
		• Life saving skills including CPR and the use of defibrillators
		• How to identify risk and manage safety in independent situations including
		  ○ Roads
		  ○ Railways
		  ○ Water
		  ○ Social settings
		• Evaluate activities on the impact they have on their own wellbeing

		* May request to be withdrawn from these lessons.

PACE Curriculum September 2026

Curriculum overview		
9	Term	Unit of work
	1	Health • Benefits of physical activity • Weight gain and health issues • Self-examination • Mental health issues
	2	Relationships • Consent • Ending relationships • Strategies for identifying and resisting pressure • The science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation (taught in science)
	3 & 4	Online and digital safety • Similarities and differences between online and real life. • Identifying harmful behaviours • The risk of viewing harmful content online • Benefits of limiting time online • Indecent images and the associated laws of possessing and distributing • Online misogyny
	5	Community • Online illegal and inappropriate content • Advice and support on inappropriate content seen online • Social media and links to escalations in conflict • Prevalence of deepfakes online • How to report concerns about information that has been circulated online
	6	Being safe • Concepts and laws relating to exploitation • What constitutes sexual harassment • Emotional damage of FGM, virginity testing and hymenoplasty and the associated laws • Ways to increase personal safety when socialising and in the wider community Health – taught in science • Menstrual and gynecological health • Reproductive health including fertility and menopause • Healthy behaviours before and during pregnancy
		* May request to be withdrawn from these lessons.

PACE Curriculum September 2026

Curriculum overview		
Year	Term	Unit of work
10	1	Health • Science relating to blood and organ donation • Gillick concept • Information about serious health conditions • How to navigate local health care provision • How to care for minor ailments
	2 & 3	Relationships • Factors that make relationships positive • Behaviours that full into the sexual harassment category • Harmful sexual behaviour • Consent • Negative influence of harmful sexual material • Harmful sexual material and the impact on healthy sexual relationships • Harmful sexual material and the emotional and physical harm • How to seek support for abusive behaviours
	4	Community • Laws relating to knives and violence • Identifying trusted adults to talk about knife crime and violence • Risks of illegal behaviour online – knife and drug supply
	5	Online safety • Indecent images and the law • The risk of deep fakes online • How to report issues online • Critical evaluation of information online and how the internet can distort and normalise unhealthy behaviours • How websites share personal data • Online scams and how to be wary of them
	6	Health • The link between all aspects of health and sexual relationships * • Facts about contraceptive choices * • Choices in relation to pregnancy (also covered in RS) • Information about Sexual transmitted infections, there prevalence and associated health risks * • How to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
		* May request to be withdrawn from these lessons.

PACE Curriculum September 2026

		Curriculum overview
Year	Term	Unit of work
11	1&2	Respectful relationships • Positive relationships • Consent • Inequalities of power in a relationship • Laws on domestic abuse • Understanding fixated behaviours and how to seek support • Harmful sexual behaviours and domestic abuse. • The risks of drugs and alcohol and sexual behaviour • How to seek support around sexual relationships
	3&4	Online safety • AI chatbots and the risks they pose • Online sub cultures • Technology and social media being used for abusive behaviours • Prevalence of deep fakes and how to identify them • How to report content online • Risks of gambling online • Misinformation and disinformation online

Parent/carer form requesting their child's withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS/CARERS			
Name of child		Class	
Name of parent/carers		Date	
Reason for withdrawing from sex education within relationships and sex education			
Any other information you would like the school to consider			
Parent/carers signature			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
Agreed actions from discussion with parents/carers	
Signed	