Relationship and Sex Education Policy
(RSE)

Date reviewed	September 2026
Reviewed by	Rashta Bibi
Approved by	FP
Planned Review date	September 2028

Introduction

"Today, I have perfected your religion for you, and have completed My blessing upon you, and chosen Islam as Dīn (religion and a way of life) for you." Al Qur'an 5:3

Islam provides guidance for all aspects of life, including personal conduct, relationships, family life and moral responsibility. At Eden Springs Girls Secondary, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is taught within the school's Islamic ethos taking into consideration parents views.

As a girls-only Islamic secondary independent school, the school seeks to provide an environment in which students can develop an appropriate understanding of relationships, personal development, puberty, marriage, family life and safeguarding within an Islamic framework.

The school seeks to educate the whole child and to develop students who understand the dignity and value of every human being, demonstrate good character and can make responsible and informed decisions.

"There is indeed a good model for you in the Messenger of Allah..." Al Qur'an 33:21

The example of the Prophet Muhammad *sallallahu alayhi wasallam* provides an important model for character, conduct, compassion, modesty and responsibility. RSE at our school is therefore informed by Islamic teachings and values while ensuring that students receive accurate, age-appropriate information about relationships, human development, safeguarding and the law.

This policy applies to secondary school age students. It sets out the school's approach to Relationships and Sex Education within its Islamic ethos. The detailed content, sequencing and progression of RSE for each year group are contained in the school's separate RSE Curriculum Mapping document.

Legal and Statutory Framework

The school has regard to the Department for Education's *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance for introduction from 1*

September 2026. The guidance applies to independent schools and must be followed from September 2026.

The school also has regard to the *Equality Act 2010*, the *Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014*, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026, and relevant legislation and guidance concerning child protection, sexual offences, sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic abuse, forced marriage, FGM, exploitation and online safety.

The Independent School Standards require an independent school to have a separate written RSE policy, to explain what is taught, when and how, to consult parents before making or revising the policy and to publish the policy on its website.

As an independent school, the statutory Health Education requirements do not apply to the school, although appropriate health and wellbeing education will continue to be provided through PSHE and the wider curriculum.

This policy should be read alongside the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, PSHE Policy, Science Curriculum Policy, Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Policy, Behaviour Policy, Online Safety Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy and Complaints Policy.

Islamic Ethos

The school's Islamic ethos provides the moral and spiritual framework within which RSE is taught.

The programme promotes the dignity and value of every human being, modesty (haya), chastity and self-respect, personal responsibility and accountability, compassion and mercy, respect for parents and family, and Huququl Ibaad — the rights of others.

The school teaches, in accordance with its Islamic faith position, that sexual intimacy belongs within marriage and that marriage carries responsibilities towards spouses, children and wider family. Marriage and family life are therefore presented positively as important institutions within Islamic teaching.

Students will be taught the Islamic perspective on relationships, marriage, sexual behaviour and family life alongside appropriate factual and legal information.

The school's Islamic ethos does not prevent students from learning about the law or about different beliefs and practices in contemporary British society. Students will be taught to understand the distinction between *knowing what the law permits* and understanding the school's *religious and moral position.*

The school will maintain its Islamic character while ensuring that students are taught to treat all people with dignity, respect and compassion.

Why RSE Should Be Taught

Effective sex education can make a significant contribution to the development of the personal skills needed by pupils if they are to establish and maintain Islamic relationships. It also enables young people to make responsible and informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

Studies have shown that the average teenager and pre-teen, whether male or female, receive their sex education from the following sources in order of priority:

- Friends (who may have a lot of misinformation)
- Magazines (which include pornographic material)
- TV and movies (including films with restricted age limits)
- School and teachers (whether through science or PSHE)
- Parents RSE Policy Eden

In order to counteract these findings, our policy aims to teach our pupils about sex education with an Islamic understanding. It also aims to clarify certain terms and clear up any misinformation pupils may have accumulated from other sources.

Effective Sex Education is essential if young Muslims are to make responsible and well informed decisions about their lives. It helps support young people through their physical, emotional and moral development. It helps young people learn to respect themselves and others and move with confidence from childhood through adolescence into adulthood.

Aims of RSE

The school's RSE programme forms part of its wider commitment to the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical and emotional development of students.

Our RSE programme aims to:

- Promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and prepare all of them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life with an Islamic understanding so they can make good use of that information
- Support pupils in managing puberty and adolescence and prepare them for an adult life as young British Muslims in which they can:
    - Be aware of their own responsibilities towards becoming young women
    - Be aware of personal hygiene issues
    - Develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour
    - Have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others

- Behave responsibly within personal relationships
- Have sufficient information about STIs including HIV
- Neither exploit others nor be exploited
- Access confidential advice and support

- Inform pupils about relationships, emotions, sex, sexuality and sexual health
- Protect themselves from abuse, exploitation, and STIs
- Develop respect, understanding and empathy towards others who may have different backgrounds, cultures, religions, sexuality, feelings and views.

RSE aims to develop students' knowledge, character and practical skills so that they can form respectful relationships, recognise personal boundaries, make responsible decisions and seek help when necessary.

The programme will support students in developing self-respect, confidence, empathy, resilience, communication and decision-making skills. Students will learn to recognise exploitation, abuse, coercion, grooming, harassment and harmful behaviour and understand how to protect themselves and others.

The programme will provide accurate and age-appropriate knowledge about puberty, human reproduction, fertility, relationships and relevant aspects of sexual health. This will be taught within the school's Islamic understanding of modesty, responsibility marriage and family life.

As a school, we distinguish clearly between Relationships Education and Sex Education. Relationships Education focuses on healthy and respectful relationships, consent, personal boundaries, safety and safeguarding, rather than the detail of sexual activity. Where appropriate, sensitive topics such as sexual violence may be explored in an age-appropriate manner to help students understand safety, respect and healthy relationships.

RSE will also help students understand relevant aspects of the law, including consent, sexual offences, online sexual behaviour and safeguarding. The school will ensure that applicable law is taught in a factual way so that students are clear about their rights and responsibilities as citizens. The school will also ensure that students understand the difference between *knowing what the law says* and the *moral and religious values taught by the school.*

Curriculum Design and Content

Curriculum Structure

The school maintains a separate RSE Curriculum Map. The DfE's guiding principles for RSE inform curriculum design by ensuring that the curriculum is relevant, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate, inclusive and sensitive to students' individual circumstances. The school may adjust the timing or sequence of teaching according to students' age, maturity, development, SEND and safeguarding needs.

The RSE Curriculum Map provides the detailed content and progression for each year group and identifies what is taught, when it is taught, the intended learning outcomes and the curriculum area through which each element is delivered.

The main RSE programme will be delivered through PSHE and Islamic Studies lessons. In addition, certain biological aspects are delivered through the science lessons through the Reproduction modules. The RSE programme is delivered in a developmental manner so that issues are explored in greater depth as pupils mature within the framework of Islamic haya and adab (modesty and good manners).

The curriculum documentation will be reviewed regularly alongside this policy to ensure that the school's provision remains coherent, age-appropriate and compliant with relevant statutory requirements.

Families and Relationships

Students will develop an understanding of caring, committed and stable relationships, family life, friendship and parental responsibility. Students will learn how these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children. They will learn how families and relationships may change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships. They will also learn the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development.

The school will teach the legal status of marriage, civil partnerships and family circumstances alongside its Islamic understanding of marriage and family life. This includes teaching that forced marriage and marrying before the age of 18 are illegal. Students will also learn to recognise situations in which a relationship may become unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when students are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust.

Respect, Boundaries and Consent

Students will develop an understanding of dignity, respect, personal boundaries and appropriate behaviour. Teaching will explore the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests, generosity, tolerance and privacy. They will learn how to communicate appropriately, manage disagreement, recognise pressure and coercion, and seek help where a relationship becomes unsafe or harmful. This will include understanding equality, respect for differences, and recognising and challenging bullying, prejudice and harmful stereotypes.

Age-appropriate teaching will cover the concept, role and legal framework of consent. Students will learn that consent must be freely given and cannot be obtained through pressure, coercion, manipulation or abuse of power, and that healthy and ethical relationships also require care, respect and consideration for the needs and wellbeing of others.

The school's Islamic teaching concerning modesty, personal responsibility and sexual conduct will be taught alongside the legal framework.

Staff should actively challenge everyday sexism, misogyny, homophobia and stereotypes.

Puberty, Reproduction and Fertility

As a girls-only school, particular attention will be given to helping students understand the facts about the menstrual cycle, including physical and emotional changes associated with female puberty and adolescence in a dignified, sensitive and age-appropriate manner.

Students will receive teaching about menstrual health, personal hygiene, physical and emotional development and other changes associated with puberty.

The curriculum content related to puberty and menstruation will be complemented by sensitive arrangements to help students prepare for and manage menstruation, including with requests for period products. The school will use appropriate language such as period pads and menstrual products instead of sanitary items or feminine hygiene products.

They will also learn about the reproductive system, human reproduction, conception, pregnancy and fertility.

Scientific aspects of human reproduction will be taught through the Science curriculum. The Madrasah (Islamic Studies) curriculum will address the religious responsibilities associated with puberty, personal hygiene, modesty, purification, marriage and family life.

Sexual Health and Contraception

Where appropriate to students' age and maturity, the curriculum will provide factual information about sexually transmitted infections, including HIV, their prevention and testing, fertility, pregnancy and contraception. Students will also learn how and when to access appropriate healthcare, sexual and reproductive health, mental health and safeguarding services for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms.

This teaching will be presented alongside the school's Islamic perspective on marriage, family life and sexual responsibility. The school does not promote sexual activity outside marriage.

Pornography and Harmful Sexual Content

Students will be taught that pornography does not represent healthy, respectful or realistic relationships and may involve exploitation, objectification, coercion and unrealistic expectations.

Pupils should learn how pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, and how sub-cultures such as 'incels' might influence our understanding of sexual ethics.

They will learn about the risks associated with viewing, creating or sharing inappropriate sexual material, including illegal images involving children.

The Islamic principles of modesty, dignity and chastity will form an important part of this teaching.

Online Safety

Students will learn about the opportunities and risks associated with online relationships and communication. This will include privacy, digital footprints, inappropriate content, cyberbullying, and online scams to extort money or valuable personal information.

Students will learn about online behaviours including image and information sharing including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc, including AI-generated sexual imagery, the prevalence of deepfakes, pornography and misogynistic influencers. Students will also learn the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse including grooming and sextortion.

Students will also learn about rapidly developing AI and other new types of technology and the risks associated with it e.g. chatbots creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice etc.

Students will be taught how to report concerns, seek help and respond safely to online pressure or exploitation.

Safeguarding

Teaching will cover a range of topics, including topics related to abusive behaviour such as sexual harassment, sexual violence, grooming, exploitation, domestic abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, forced marriage and FGM. Different forms of abuse will be addressed sensitively and clearly at appropriate ages.

Students will learn to recognise misogyny, coercive attitudes, harmful online communities and behaviour that normalises violence against women and girls.

The school makes clear that forced marriage is abuse and FGM is harmful and illegal. Neither can be justified in the name of Islam.

The school will make clear that being a victim of abuse is never the fault of the child or young person and that students should seek help from a trusted adult if they or someone else may be at risk. For students who are experiencing or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships, including at home, the school has an important role as a place of consistency and safety where students can find support.

As discussions about sensitive topics in RSHE can lead to increased safeguarding reports, staff will remain alert to any signs that a student may be experiencing neglect or abuse, including the effects of domestic abuse.

If staff have concerns about a student's welfare they will act on them immediately following the processes set out in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy/ Part 1 of KCSIE 2026.

Staff are aware of mandatory reporting duties, including those relating to FGM. Staff will never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

Students will be helped to understand how confidentiality will be handled in a lesson and what might happen if they choose to make a report, about themselves or a peer. Students will be informed about where they can report any concerns and seek help, including to external services if they prefer or choose to do so.

Where lessons are delivered by external agencies, the school will agree in advance of the session how a safeguarding concern would be dealt with by the external visitor and they are supported to follow the school's approach to RSE. Staff remain present to support safe and effective practice. If a visitor/external agency receives a disclosure from a student, they will follow the school's safeguarding procedures by reporting the concern to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) without delay.

The RSE policy supports and aligns with the school's wider safeguarding approach and is informed by statutory guidance, including *KCSIE 2026*.

Equality, Diversity and Respect

The school will comply with its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will promote dignity, respect and protection from discrimination and bullying.

LGBTQ+ Content

The school will include parents/carers when discussing families and teach pupils the "facts and the law" about biological sex and gender reassignment, including that legal rights may differ based on biological sex.

Actively involve parents/carers where a child who is questioning their gender asks for support, unless there are circumstances where doing this would constitute a greater risk to the child than not involving them.

Take a 'very careful approach' in relation to accommodating social transition. Staff should not adopt any changes relating to social transition unless a decision has been made by the school and the child's parents/carers have been involved.

School Premises and Facilities

Schools must not allow children into toilets, changing rooms or showers designated for the opposite biological sex. This includes where schools are responding to a request to support social transition for children who are questioning their gender.

If a pupil who is questioning their gender doesn't want to use the toilet, changing rooms and showers designated for their biological sex, schools should consider whether they can provide alternative facilities that don't compromise the provision of single-sex facilities, or the safety, comfort, privacy or dignity of the child or any other children.

Preparation for life in modern Britain

RSE contributes to the school's wider responsibility to prepare students for life in modern Britain.

Students will develop an understanding of personal responsibility, equality, respect, diversity, safeguarding and the importance of treating others with dignity.

The school will help students understand that people may hold different religious, cultural, moral and philosophical views. Students will be encouraged to engage respectfully with difference and disagreement while remaining secure in their Islamic faith and identity.

The school's girls-only and Islamic environment provides a supportive context in which students can develop confidence, self-respect, personal safety awareness and the ability to make responsible decisions

General Equality Principles

Students will be taught about the law relating to the protected characteristics in an age-appropriate and sensitive manner. Teaching will be based on factual and legally accurate information regarding biological sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, in accordance with statutory guidance.

As an Islamic faith school, the school will teach its distinctive religious perspective on relationships, marriage, sexual behaviour and family life.

The school will ensure that topics in RSE are taught in a way which does not discriminate against students or amount to harassment. The school will teach students to understand the importance of equality and respect for each person and to reject discrimination, bullying and harassment. Students will learn that people may hold different beliefs, values and life choices, and that it is possible to treat others with respect and kindness while holding different religious, moral or philosophical views.

The school recognises that students may hold sincere religious beliefs and will encourage them to express those beliefs respectfully and appropriately while showing respect towards others.

The fact that the school is a ***girls-only school*** does not remove the school's responsibility to provide students with an appropriate understanding of the wider society in which they live.

The school will not tolerate bullying, harassment or discriminatory behaviour towards any student on the basis of a protected characteristic or any other personal characteristic.

Teaching and Delivery

Delivery Methods

RSE may be delivered through PSHE, Science, Madrasah (Islamic Studies), Computer Science/ICT and appropriate pastoral or enrichment activities.

The school's girls-only environment allows sensitive aspects of puberty, menstruation, female health, personal safety and relationships to be addressed in a setting appropriate to the students.

A wide range of teaching methods are used that enable pupils to actively participate in their own learning. This includes the use of quizzes, case studies, research, role play, videos, small group participation and discussion and use of appropriate guest speakers.

Teaching is conducted in a safe learning environment through the use of ground rules and distancing techniques so that pupils are not 'put on the spot' or expected to discuss their own personal issues in class.

Resources

Teaching will use methods and resources appropriate to the age, maturity and developmental needs of students. Resources will be reviewed to ensure that they are factually accurate, appropriate, sensitive to the school's Islamic ethos and consistent with safeguarding requirements.

Resources will be reviewed regularly to ensure continued accuracy, safeguarding suitability and compliance with statutory guidance.

Parents/carers should be aware of what's being taught, and should be able to view all RSHE curriculum materials on request.

External Organisations

Occasionally, appropriate and suitably experienced and/or knowledgeable visitors from outside school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE in the school.

Our school has a code of practice for using visitors:

- Visitors are invited into school because of the particular expertise or contribution they are able to make
- All input to PSHE lessons are part of a planned programme and negotiated and agreed with staff in advance
- All visitors are supervised/supported by a member of staff at all times
- The input of visitors is monitored and evaluated by staff and pupils. This evaluation informs future planning.

Staff Training

Staff who teach RSE will receive appropriate support and training to enable them to deliver the curriculum confidently, sensitively and in accordance with both the school's Islamic ethos and statutory requirements. Staff are trained in safeguarding and offering support, recognising the increased possibility of disclosures.

Sensitive Questions and Confidentiality

Handling Questions

The school believes that pupils should have opportunities to have their genuine questions answered in a sensible and matter-of-fact manner. However, occasionally a pupil may ask a particularly explicit, difficult or embarrassing question in class. Teachers will use their skill and discretion to decide whether to answer questions in class and, if so, how.

They will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in class by discussing clear ground rules with pupils and by taking an approach that encourages pupils to be mature and sensible. If a teacher does not know the answer to a question, they will acknowledge this and suggest that they and the pupils research the answer to the question together.

If a question is too explicit or inappropriate to answer in class at that moment, teachers will acknowledge it and attend to it later with the pupil who asked it. If a question is too personal, teachers will remind pupils about the ground rules and if necessary point out appropriate sources of support. If a teacher is concerned that a pupil is at risk of abuse they will follow the school's child protection procedures. All staff are advised to seek the support and advice of the Islamic Coordinator in all sensitive matters.

Staff should:

- Answer questions asked in terms of Islamic etiquette
- Answer only those questions that relate directly to the agreed programme/lesson
- Make it clear, through ground rules, that no pupil should ask personal questions and that Islamic adab (etiquettes and manners) be upheld at all times, for example; pupils should be encouraged to use the appropriate terminology for parts of the body
- Be prepared to modify the programme if a certain question recurs (perhaps because of media coverage)
- Make provision for questions about sex, reproduction and puberty to be answered individually, as they arise, outside the planned programme with appropriate members of staff such as Islamic Coordinator
- Tell pupils that their question will be answered in a later part of the RSE class depending on the appropriateness of the question.

Language

All staff are expected to:

- Use the correct terms for all body parts as this is deemed good practice
- Openly teach what 'slang' words mean and that some are offensive
- Avoid the use of any slang

Confidentiality

RSE may sometimes raise sensitive, personal questions or questions about RSE topics beyond the school's curriculum or relate to sex education from which they have been withdrawn. Staff will respond professionally and according to the student's age, maturity and circumstances, prioritising the student's wellbeing and safeguarding, with an emphasis on supporting the student.

Staff are not required to answer every question immediately and may decide that a question is more appropriately addressed through planned teaching or with the support of the RSE Lead, safeguarding team or parents. Staff will also receive guidance on handling questions that are not appropriate for classroom discussion.

A question may be answered immediately, addressed at a later stage, answered privately or referred to an appropriate member of staff. Where appropriate, students may also be directed to a parent/carer, trusted adult or appropriate support service.

School staff cannot promise absolute confidentiality if approached by a pupil for help. Staff must make this clear to pupils. Child protection procedures must be followed when any disclosures about abuse are made.

Staff must not promise confidentiality to students. Where a question, comment or disclosure indicates that a student may be at risk of harm, the member of staff must follow the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Where it is clear that a pupil would benefit from the involvement of a third party, staff should seek the consent of the pupil to do so. If appropriate, staff might also inform the third party together with the pupil. Unless clearly inappropriate, pupils will always be encouraged to talk to their parent/carer.

Students with SEND

The school is committed to ensuring that RSE is accessible to students with special educational needs and disabilities.

The school recognises that students with SEND may be more vulnerable than their peers to harmful sexual behaviour, sexual abuse, exploitation and violence, bullying and other issues. Accessible RSE is therefore particularly important for these students, including those with social, emotional and mental health needs or learning disabilities.

Teaching will be adapted where necessary according to students' developmental level, communication needs, cognitive ability, individual circumstances and safeguarding needs and supports their preparation for adulthood.

Reasonable adjustments will be made so that students can access the curriculum and understand key messages about relationships, personal safety and safeguarding.

Parents and Withdrawal

Parental Engagement

The school recognises parents as important partners in the education of their children.

Parents will be consulted before this policy is adopted or substantially revised. The school will provide parents with appropriate information about the RSE programme, publish the final policy on its website and provide a copy free of charge upon request. Parents/carers should be aware of what's being taught, and should be able to view all RSHE curriculum materials on request.

Parents may view curriculum materials and resources used within the RSE programme upon request.

Right to Withdraw

Parents have a statutory right to request that their child is withdrawn from some or all of the *sex education* element of RSE, subject to the statutory arrangements.

Parents cannot withdraw students from Relationships Education or from statutory Science teaching, including biological aspects of human reproduction.

Parents also cannot withdraw students from safeguarding education or teaching required to meet other statutory obligations.

Primary schools must automatically grant a request to withdraw a pupil from sex education. Secondary schools can now refuse a request in exceptional circumstances, e.g. because of safeguarding concerns.

However, in accordance with statutory requirements, a student who is ordinarily three terms from their sixteenth birthday may choose to receive sex education despite a parental request for withdrawal.