

Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE): Parent and Carer Information

All students are entitled to receive Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSE) as part of a broad and balanced PSHE curriculum which promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. – *Relationships, Sex and Health Education (Statutory Guidance 2025)*.

The law requires schools to provide Relationships Education (primary), Relationships and Sex Education (secondary), and Health Education (primary and secondary). Parents and carers **cannot withdraw their child from Relationships Education or Health Education**. These subjects are compulsory for all students.

However, the law **does give parents/carers the right to withdraw their child(ren) from some or all of the sex education delivered as part of the RSE programme in secondary schools**. This right does not extend to any other part of the PSHE curriculum. At The Sutton Academy, we respect that right.

In the UK, the Department for Education does not prescribe a set scheme of work for RSE but provides statutory guidance which schools must follow. Schools are expected to ensure that RSE reflects the age, maturity and background of students, and that it supports pupils' personal development, safeguarding, and wellbeing. At The Sutton Academy, we believe our RSE curriculum fulfils these criteria.

Parental right to withdraw children from sex education

Parents/carers have the right to choose whether to withdraw their child from the sex education element of RSE (other than the science curriculum, where reproduction is statutory) without influence from the school. Schools must ensure that parents/carers are informed of this right and are aware of the educational objectives and content of the sex education curriculum.

If students are withdrawn from sex education, schools have a duty to supervise them, though not to provide additional teaching or to incur extra cost. Students will remain on school premises.

Students have the right to opt into sex education themselves once they reach three terms before their 16th birthday. At this point, the school is legally required to allow them to take part in sex education if they wish.

Withdrawal Procedure

If a parent chooses to withdraw their child from sex education, they need to:

- Inform the school of their request for their child(ren) to be withdrawn, specifying whether this applies to all or part of the sex education curriculum. This should be done by completing the form in this document.
- Attend a discussion meeting (as recommended in the guidance) to ensure they are fully aware of the content and purpose of sex education and the possible impact of withdrawal.
- Understand that the school will supervise their child(ren) during the withdrawal period and will provide alternative PSHE work to support their understanding of other topics.

Whilst the academy respects the rights of parents/carers to withdraw their child(ren) from sex education, these rights **do not apply to Relationships Education or Health Education**, or to statutory science content that includes human reproduction.