

Personal, Social and Health Education

Relationships and Sex Education policy (Secondary)

Policy Owner	Laura O'Shaughnessy, Head of Personal Development
Approved by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO • Education Standards Committee
Last reviewed on	January 2025
Next review date	January 2026 or upon new DfE Guidance

Rationale

- 1) PSHE helps to give pupils the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives, in order to become informed, active and responsible citizens. Our Relationships and Sex Education curriculum (RSE) is taught as part of our PSHE curriculum.

Legislation and guidance

- 2) Under the new guidance issued by the DfE, by September 2020, Relationships Education at secondary schools will be compulsory. As a secondary academy, we must provide Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. In teaching RSE, we are required to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996. In addition, Health Education is compulsory in all state schools. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Schools must consult with parents regarding the implementation of the RSE policy.

Practical considerations

- 3) We believe that, to be effective, RSE should always be taught within a broader PSHE education programme. RSE enhances and is enhanced by learning related to topics including anti-bullying; keeping safe on- and off-line; keeping physically and mentally healthy, learning about drugs, alcohol and tobacco; and the development of skills and attributes such as communication skills, managing peer pressure, risk management, resilience and decision making.
- 4) The academy will continue to include lessons on sex education as part of its work in RSE tailoring teaching to take into account the age and physical maturity of its pupils

Working with parents

- 5) Our academy seeks to work in partnership with parents to provide effective PSHE and RSE. Parents need to know that the school's RSE programme will complement and support their role as parents. We have consulted with parents during this policy's initial development and will do so subsequently where significant changes to the nature of curriculum delivery and/or the content of the school's curriculum are planned. It should be noted that, in line with DfE advice, consultation does not give parents the right to veto any element of the policy. Schools will consider the views of all parents and try to ensure that different opinions are considered.
- 6) Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. Parents do not have to give their reasons for withdrawing their children but will be asked to meet so that we can explain the implications of removing children.

Definition of Relationships Education

RSE in schools is part of the life-long learning about the characteristics of positive relationships including friendships, family relationships, and relationships with other children and adults. It also includes learning about positive emotional and mental wellbeing and how friendships can impact on this. Learning will also include how to recognise different types of abuse, the rights children have over their own bodies and how to seek advice and how to stay safe both on and off line. Pupils will also learn about sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE is not about the promotion of any form of sexual activity.

Aims of the PSHE (including RSE) policy

7) The aims of the PSHE and RSE curriculum are to:

- promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of all pupils
- help young people to learn to respect themselves and others so preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life
- allow pupils to acknowledge and appreciate difference and diversity
- teach pupils how to make informed choices
- prepare pupils to be positive and active members of a democratic society
- teach pupils to understand what constitutes a safe and healthy lifestyle
- provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place regarding issues that may affect their lives
- promote safety in forming and maintaining relationships
- provide pupils with a toolkit for understanding and managing their emotions
- help pupils to identify the characteristics of healthy relationships, how relationships may affect mental and physical health, and how to stay safe on-line
- prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- help pupils understand the key concepts included in British Values

The Health Education Curriculum

8) The focus will be on teaching the characteristics of good physical health and mental well-being. Teachers make it clear that mental well-being is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health.

9) This includes pupils being taught:

- the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep
- giving pupils the language and knowledge to understand the normal range of emotions that everyone experiences
- about issues such as isolation, unhappiness, bullying and the negative impacts of poor health and wellbeing.

Responsibilities

10) The responsibilities of subject leader/s for PSHE/RSE include (but are not limited to):

- regularly updating curriculum plans so that the content of what is taught is in line with statutory requirements/guidance
- liaising with the sixth form leader (where relevant) to ensure that the PSHE/RSE curriculum post-16 builds upon pupils' prior learning appropriately
- analysing information from safeguarding and pastoral leaders to determine the most appropriate point to introduce or revisit the teaching of pupils about particular risks and issues
- ensuring that qualitative checks are made of the PSHE/RSE curriculum's implementation, through visits to lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work
- periodically seeking the views of pupils, staff and parents about the content of the PSHE/RSE curriculum and the effectiveness with which it is implemented
- providing guidance and support as required for those teaching PSHE/RSE.

11) Staff are responsible for:

- delivering PSHE/RSE in a sensitive manner
- modelling positive attitudes towards PSHE/SRE
- responding to the needs of individual pupils
- responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory aspects of RSE.

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching PSHE/RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching PSHE or RSE should discuss these with the principal.

12) Pupils are expected to:

- engage fully in PSHE/RSE, treating others with respect and sensitivity when engaged in discussion

Parents' right to withdraw

- 13) Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory, non-science related components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before their child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will arrange this. Requests for withdrawal must be put in writing. Alternative work will be provided for pupils who are withdrawn from sex education. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education.

Safeguarding

- 14) The school may invite outside visitors to support teaching and learning, e.g. school nurse, following the protocol for visitors. Staff are aware of the need for confidentiality and to handle sensitive and controversial issues carefully. The nature of this subject means that, at times, issues may arise that cause safeguarding concerns and staff are aware of the need to follow the child protection policy at all times.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

- 15) The particular needs and vulnerabilities of pupils with SEND will be considered when teaching RSE.

Equalities

In meeting the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 the school is committed to the provision of RSE to all of its pupils. Every child is entitled to receive high-quality RSE regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, age, culture, disability, sexuality, language, special needs, and social circumstances.

Assessment and monitoring

- 16) Assessment will be completed using Teacher Assessment. Self-assessment will take place where and when the teacher deems suitable.
- 17) Monitoring of work in the classroom will form part of the school's established programme of lesson monitoring and evaluation.

Scheme of Work

- 18) See appendix

Review

- 19) This policy will be reviewed annually, involving parental consultation when changes are being considered, and approved by the board of trustees.

Appendix One: Indicative content for Relationships and Sex Education

By the end of secondary school: Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of secondary phase:

Families	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that there are different types of committed, stable relationships. • how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children. • what marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony. • why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into. • the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships. • the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting. • how to: determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy: judge when a family, friend, intimate or other relationship is unsafe (and to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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

	<p>different (non-sexual) types of relationship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. • how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). • that in school and in wider society they can expect to be treated with respect by others, and that in turn they should show due respect to others, including people in positions of authority and due tolerance of other people's beliefs. • about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help. • that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control. • what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable. • the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality (particularly with reference to the protected characteristics as defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal.
Online and media	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online. • about online risks, including that any material someone provides to another has the potential to be shared online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. • not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them. • what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online. • the impact of viewing harmful content. • that specifically sexually explicit material e.g. pornography presents a distorted picture of sexual behaviours, can damage the way people see themselves in relation to others and negatively affect how they behave towards sexual partners. • that sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal

	<p>offence which carries severe penalties including jail.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.
Being safe	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships. • how people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online).
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship. • that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing. • the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women. • that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others. • that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex. • the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available. • the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage. • that there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help). • how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing. • about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment. • how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky

	<p>sexual behaviour.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment.
The law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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. • Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 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 and radicalisation - criminal exploitation (for example through gang involvement or 'county lines' drug operations) - hate online - female genital mutilation (FGM)

Appendix Two: indicative content for ‘physical health and mental wellbeing’ at secondary school

Mental wellbeing	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary. • that happiness is linked to being connected to others. • how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns. • common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression). • how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others’ mental health. • the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.
Internet safety and harms	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image, how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and eating disorders and extreme weight loss are a specialised area and schools should use qualified support or advice as needed. Schools may consider accessing support from the NHS or local specialist services who may be able to provide advice and CPD for teachers. DRAFT 37 information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online. • how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours
Physical health and fitness	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress. • the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health. • about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.

Healthy eating	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer.
Drugs, alcohol and tobacco	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions. • the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances. • the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood. • the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency. • awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks. • the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so.
Health and prevention	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics. • about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist. • (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening • the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination. • the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.
Basic first aid	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic treatment for common injuries. • life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR. • the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.
Changing adolescent body	<p>Pupils should know</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing. • the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.

Appendix 3: Schedule of Content Delivery by Year

AMEND/DELETE BELOW/ INSERT SCHOOL'S PSHE/RSE CURRICULUM PLAN



	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Year 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendship: making and exiting. • Teamwork/communication • Online safety and Grooming • Family Relationships • Bullying/Banter • Diversity and identity • Equality: Racism and Anti-racism • Mental Wellbeing and resilience programme 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Romance/Relationships • Healthy Relationships • Healthy Living: balanced diet. • Unhealthy Lifestyle consequences • Puberty/Periods/Growing Up • Drugs – Tobacco/Alcohol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Wellbeing: self confidence • First Aid • FGM
Year 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health including mindfulness • Self-esteem • Depression/anxiety • Energy Drinks • Active Lifestyle • Drug Awareness: Volatile Substance Abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Pressure • Equality: Prejudice and Discrimination • Tolerance (British Values) • Domestic Conflict • Consent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contraception • Safe Relationships • Sexting • LGBTQI+/Homophobia • Online Grooming
Year 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health;stress • Self-Harm • Teenage Pregnancy • Body Image • Eating Disorders • Smoking/Vaping • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drugs: Alcohol and Illegal Drugs • Knife Crime and County Lines • Equality, prejudice and discrimination (religious) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role Models • Abusive Relationships • STIs • Dangers of Pornography • LGBTQI+



	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3
Year 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships: social cohesion Hate Crime Drugs – County Lines Prejudice and Discrimination: Racism and Anti-Racism Fake News 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Media-online friendships and relationships Extremism and Radicalisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Binge Drinking Personal Safety – Drugs/Alcohol Digital Footprint Parenting Consent/Rape Relationship Break-Up Arranged vs Forced Marriages
Year 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Dark Web Independent living: Living as an adult. Online Fraud 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSE Rest and Sleep Screen Time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship boundaries; Harassment/Stalking
Year 12 and 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Independent living Physical, mental and health wellbeing Assessing health and safety Advice and support Healthy living First Aid The Media /Use of social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Healthy relationships in range of settings Parenting skills Consent Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diverse communities Making informed life choices Safety in an online and connected world