

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy



Should be read in conjunction with the PSHEE policy.

UPDATED BY	DATE OF ISSUE	NEXT REVIEW DATE
Head of PSHEE & Senior Deputy Head, Pastoral	September 2025	September 2026

RSE Introduction and Aims

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is an essential part of the PSHEE curriculum in our school.

RSE aims to equip young people with the knowledge to build healthy, respectful relationships of all kinds. It teaches what makes a good friend, partner, or colleague, and covers topics including online safety, contraception, intimacy, consent, and acceptable behaviour.

RSE supports mental well-being by helping students recognise healthy vs. unhealthy relationships and how to handle them. It does not promote early sexual activity but encourages self-respect, confidence, and informed decision-making. Understanding sexual health and safer sex is essential for making responsible choices throughout life.

We recognise that parents and guardians are the primary educators of their children, and we seek to work in partnership with them to ensure that pupils receive accurate information and appropriate guidance.

Pupils will be encouraged to develop healthy attitudes, values and behaviours by:

- Learning the importance of developing individual values and listening to and valuing one's inner voice
- Learning the value of mutual respect, love and consideration for the perspectives of others in relationships
- Exploring moral dilemmas and developing critical thinking as part of practising decision-making
- Recognising the value of stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children, understanding that different types of families can provide a loving environment

Pupils will be encouraged to develop personal and social skills by:

- Practising self-respect, empathy and consideration for others
- Learning to manage emotions individually and when relating to others
- Being able to communicate about sexual matters with confidence and dignity, and feeling empowered always to have the right to give or not to give consent to sexual activity
- Learning to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice, e.g. sexism and homophobia
- Understanding how issues of gender and sexuality can have an impact on mental health
- Managing conflict and learning how to recognise, avoid and seek support for any experience of exploitation or abuse

Pupils will be encouraged to develop the appropriate knowledge and understanding by:

- Knowing relevant laws and understanding an individual's rights, particularly as it relates to consent
- Learning about physical and mental development at appropriate stages, including the effects of puberty and understanding how this may affect decisions and their consequences
- Learning about reproduction, sexuality, sexual orientation, sexual health and emotions around relationships and intimacy
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Learning about sexually transmitted infections, their transmission and prevention and sources of support

Themes relevant to RSE are also explored through work done in academic subjects. These are outlined in Appendix A

Delivery of RSE

In the Senior School, RSE is delivered primarily through PSHEE and is led by specialist teachers and outside speakers. However, aspects will also be addressed through curriculum lessons, assemblies, form times, and other school activities. The Head of PSHEE plans all lessons following consultation with Heads of Year and gathering pupil and parent feedback. The programme is reviewed annually to ensure it meets the needs of the whole school community, including pupils with SEND. We ensure that RSE is age-appropriate and relevant, with the curriculum developing alongside our pupils to meet their evolving needs.

For our younger pupils, the programme is developmental, laying the foundations for future learning. For older pupils, it plays a significant role in supporting their individual journeys through adolescence into adulthood. We are committed to ensuring the RSE curriculum is relevant and inclusive for all students.

Continuity of provision between the Junior and Senior Schools

The PSHEEE co-ordinator in the Junior School and the Head of PSHEEE in the Senior School meet regularly to review the scheme of work to ensure continuity and progression between the two schools, developing a spiral curriculum. In addition, the coordinators discuss any common issues or trends emerging in certain year groups and adapt the scheme of work to address the needs of all girls in both the Junior and Senior schools.

With the new intake of pupils in Years 3 and 7, certain objectives are revisited to ensure that all pupils have the knowledge and understanding of the topics covered. For example, NSPCC PANTS lessons are revisited in Year 3, and Puberty is taught in Years 5 and revisited in Year 7.

Topic	Year Groups covered KS2/KS3/KS4
Relationships	
Different types of families, features, and characteristics of healthy family life	6, 7, 10, 11
Importance of friendships, what makes a good friendship and that friendships can change over time	5, 7, 10
Consent, boundaries in relation to physical situations	5, 7- 11
Cyber bullying	6, 7, 8, 10(mobile phone behaviour)
Sexuality and gender	6, 8 - 10
Health and Wellbeing	
Puberty	4, 5, 7, 8
Healthy Eating	5, 7 - 9
Sleep and Exercise	5, 7 - 10

Continuity into the Sixth Form

The Head of PSHEE and the Head of Sixth Form meet to ensure the continuity that occurs throughout KS3 and 4 is maintained into the Sixth Form.

Teaching Methods and Sensitivity

Teachers deliver Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) in a sensitive and age-appropriate manner. Pupils are encouraged to ask questions openly; if a teacher is unsure how to respond, they may choose to follow up later or provide an anonymous question box to ensure all queries are addressed respectfully.

Materials are presented factually and objectively while recognising and respecting diverse religious beliefs and moral viewpoints. Lessons are adapted to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs by planning accessible work and using clear, straightforward language. Communication with the SEND department is maintained to identify and implement best practices that meet the needs of all students. If a topic is potentially triggering or difficult for a pupil to engage with, alternative learning methods are offered. These may include working individually, expressing thoughts in writing instead of speaking, or, if necessary, allowing the pupil to leave the lesson. All lesson materials are shared via Google Classroom to ensure students have ongoing access.

The teaching approaches in RSE prioritise establishing trust and respect between teachers and students, which is essential when discussing sensitive topics. Active participation is key to help students learn about themselves—developing skills, acquiring knowledge, and exploring their beliefs and values. This is encouraged through a variety of interactive activities, including:

- Discussions
- Role play
- Brainstorming sessions
- Think/pair/share exercises
- Collaborative group work
- Listening tasks
- Questionnaires and quizzes
- Problem-solving challenges
- Video, film, or YouTube clips
- Case studies

Staff training

Staff are informed in advance of RSE topics covered with their year groups. PSHEE/RSE teachers meet regularly to discuss specific RSE and PSHEE curriculum areas. Staff are asked to complete individual learning in advance of meetings for discussion. Learning takes place through organisations such as the PSHE Association and Brook.

Confidentiality

Teachers conduct RSE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence; however, teachers can never promise unconditional confidentiality to a pupil. Indeed, if a teacher feels that a pupil is going to tell them something significant, or if a pupil requests in advance that nobody else be told, the member of staff needs to stress to the child that this may not be possible. If a pupil makes a reference to having been involved in under-aged sexual activity or if a pupil indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse, the teacher will take the matter very seriously and report the matter immediately to the Designated Safeguarding Lead in line with the school safeguarding procedures.

Answering Difficult Questions

Sometimes a pupil will ask an explicit or difficult question in the classroom. Questions do not have to be answered directly or immediately. If a teacher is uncomfortable with the nature of a question, they should decline to answer it at the time, although a child should never be made to feel uncomfortable for having asked a question.

Ahead of the lesson, staff should consider the possible questions that may be asked. Teachers can speak to more experienced staff members and even practice answering some of these questions. Distancing techniques such as 'I read/saw' can be used to offer information. Staff should know the organisations they would direct pupils to for further information. (E.g. Brook)

The anonymous writing of questions to be answered randomly by the teacher can overcome some of these situations, allowing time to develop an answer. Teachers should also be aware that, to respond to the demands of pupils with specific special educational needs, they may need to plan work in different ways or be more explicit in their explanations. Some pupils may find topics difficult to discuss, either because of a special educational need or due to their stage of emotional development. Consideration of this is given by the teacher, allowing pupils to engage with the learning and activities at their own pace.

Religious Views

As part of the sex education programme, issues of contraception, HIV/AIDS and sexuality are addressed. Facts are presented in an objective and balanced way. Pupils will be made aware of the difference between fact, opinion and religious belief.

The Role of Parents and Guardians

Pupils are encouraged to appreciate the qualities of healthy relationships and family life, emphasising respect, care and support. The School is aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and guardians. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with parents/guardians through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. In promoting this objective, we aim to:

- Seek input from parents about the content and delivery of the RSE curriculum
- Answer any questions that parents/guardians may have about the sex education of their child
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise about the guidance document or the arrangements for RSE in the school

- Deal with sensitive issues and questions arising from the programme of study and deal with them as honestly as possible

We work hard to ensure that our RSE programme is culturally sensitive and appropriate. Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, parents have the right to withdraw their child from all or part of the formal Sex Education programme, but they are not allowed to withdraw their child from Relationship Education or Health Education (including puberty and menstruation). If a parent wishes their child to be withdrawn from sex education lessons, they should first discuss this with the relevant Head of Year, clarifying what will be taught and which aspects they wish their child withdrawn from. Parents are then asked to write a letter to the Head, formally requesting permission for this. The Head or Senior Deputy Head will likely discuss the parent's concerns before granting the withdrawal. If the parent still wishes to have their child withdrawn from Sex Education, the School will comply with the parents' wishes up to and until three terms before the child's 16th birthday (which is generally during Year 11). After that time, the pupil's wishes will determine whether they attend RSE lessons. This is in keeping with DfE statutory guidelines. Should a parent wish to remove their child from the sex education programme, that pupil cannot take part in the sex education programme until the request for removal has been cancelled, by parents, in writing or until three terms before the child's 16th birthday, at which point the child's wishes will be acted upon.

Parents should be aware that issues of reproduction or of a moral and ethical nature may arise from topics in subjects such as Biology and P&R and in these instances, when a discussion takes place within the context of the subject curriculum, it will not be deemed to be part of the RSE programme and it is not, therefore, subject to the parental right of withdrawal.

Use of visitors/outside organisations

Visitors from external agencies are invaluable in the delivery of RSE. The Protocol for Visiting Speakers is followed to ensure the content of a visiting speech is not likely to undermine the values and aims of the school, and the content meets the needs of the pupils. The Head of PSHEE liaises with all external facilitators in advance to review and approve the content.

Assessment, Monitoring and Review

The RSE programme is regularly reviewed to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to students' needs. This review process includes staff feedback on individual lessons, pupil voice and assessment, and communication with parents via School post and a biennial RSE consultation. As a result, the curriculum is continuously evolving and developing to reflect the needs of the school community.

Quality of delivery is maintained through learning walks and teacher observations, which also help identify staff training requirements. After each lesson, staff can provide feedback, which informs the review and planning of the programme for the following academic year.

Assessment is integral to the RSE programme and focuses on understanding what pupils have learned and what areas may need further development. This takes place throughout lessons in a variety of formats to measure individual learning and progress. Tools used include:

- Baseline and exit questions
- Mind maps

- Quizzes
- 'I can' statements
- End-of-term knowledge checkers

Pupils' work is stored in Google Classroom, with the knowledge checkers administered through Google Forms.

The Head of PSHEE collates and analyses all feedback and assessment data to determine whether specific topics need to be revisited or clarified—particularly regarding factual and legal content. This information plays a crucial role in shaping the programme for the following year.

Sources of guidance for this policy

ISI Handbook 2024

DfE Guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education 2025

PSHE Association

Gender Questioning Children 2023

Appendix A: RSE themes explored through academic curriculum work

Year Group	Relationships	Health & wellbeing	Living in the wider world
7	Sexuality & gender – “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” Traditional values and individualism (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Roman citizenship & the role of women in society (Latin)
		Reproduction (Biology)	Roman Justice System – compared to British (Latin)
		Miscarriages (Biology)	Slavery and Freedom (Latin)
			Slavery in the 20 th / 21 st centuries (Latin)
8	Sexuality and gender Traditional expectations and individualism “Romeo & Juliet” or ‘Much Ado About Nothing’ (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Roman and British education systems (Latin)
9	Marriage and relationships ‘Macbeth’ (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Prejudice and Discrimination(P&R)
			Attitudes towards women throughout history, inc: • Mary I and Elizabeth I • Suffragettes in the 20th century (History)
			Women getting the right to vote (History)
10	Sexuality & gender – ‘Pride and Prejudice’ (English)	Contraception - whether religions agree (P&R)	
	Bullying (French)	Assisted fertility (P&R)	Gender Roles (P&R)
	Relationships - family and friends (Mandarin)		Ethical issues relating to organ donation and transplants (Biology)
	Religious attitudes to sexuality, marriage and the family (P&R)		Ethical issues relating to embryo screening, IVF, cloning and vaccination (Biology)
		Sex Determination (Biology)	Roman Army (Latin)
		Abortion (Biology)	The Jews and the Romans (Latin)
11	Sexuality & gender – ‘A Streetcar Named Desire’ (English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Ethical issues relating to organ donation and transplants (Biology)
	Gender Issues and Equality (French)	Circulatory System conditions (Biology)	Ethical issues relating to embryo screening, IVF, cloning and vaccination (Biology)
		Abortion (P&R)	Democracy, law and human rights – ‘A View From The Bridge’ (English)
12	Polyamorous relationships (P&R)	Abortion (P&R)	Animal experimentation (P&R)
	Homosexuality (P&R)	Euthanasia (P&R)	Nuclear weapons (P&R)
	Relationships through the lens of Women in Literature.(English)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Trade in the British Empire (History)
	Relationships through the lens of American Literature 1880-194 (English)	Diseases (Biology)	Politics and international affairs (History)
13	Relationships topic (Psychology)	Healthy Lifestyles (PE)	Trade in the British Empire (History)