



RELATIONSHIPS & SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Last reviewed: Summer 2025
Next review due: Summer 2026

VISION

Our Vision is to develop literate, numerate, global citizens who ASPIRE, i.e. they are: Ambitious, Self-confident, Physically literate, Independent learners, Resilient, Emotionally literate.

OBJECTIVES

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- Support the Academy's ASPIRE ethos to ensure our learners grow up with the skills they need to be global citizens

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

As a secondary academy, we must provide RSE to all students under section 34 of the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

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 406 and 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 The Bourne Academy we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation – this policy was introduced to parents via the regular Parent Voice Meetings
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE through our Student Voice meetings
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

DEFINITION

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, 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 curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1 but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, taking into account the age, needs and feelings of pupils. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

DELIVERY OF RSE

RSE is taught within the SMSc education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

Students also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional. We also hold regular themed ASPIRE days which enable us to ensure our RSE content is fully delivered and themed on topics such as mental health, Relationships etc

We also offer a comprehensive tutor programme where RSE topics are delivered by tutors.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

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

We also offer an LGBTQ group session run by staff members.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

7.1 The Governing Body

The governing body will approve the RSE policy, and hold the Principal to account for its implementation.

7.2 The Principal

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE (see section 8). This task may be delegated to the Assistant Principal - Inclusion or the Vice Principal, but the final decision lies with the Principal.

7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way

- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE

- Monitoring progress

- Responding to the needs of individual students

- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE

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 Assistant Principal – Inclusion, or the Principal.

All teachers and tutors will have a responsibility to deliver aspects of RSE as part of their teacher standards.

7.4 Students

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

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child 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 Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Principal.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Principal will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action, which may include withdrawing the student from applicable sessions. Students who are withdrawn from sessions will complete alternative work in the isolation room – this is not a sanction, but an available space for them to be accommodated and supervised.

TRAINING

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

The Assistant Principal will 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 SLT through:

Tutor time and lesson observations as per schedule throughout the academic year.

Student's development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed by Ashley St John (Vice Principal) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing Body and Principal.

Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<p>That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</p> <p>How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</p> <p>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</p> <p>Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</p> <p>The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</p> <p>The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</p> <p>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</p>
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<p>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 different (non-sexual) types of relationship</p> <p>Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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</p> <p>About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</p> <p>That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</p> <p>What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</p> <p>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</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Online and media	<p>Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</p> <p>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</p> <p>Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</p> <p>What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</p> <p>The impact of viewing harmful content</p> <p>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</p> <p>That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</p> <p>How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</p>
Being safe	<p>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</p> <p>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)</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<p>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</p> <p>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</p> <p>The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</p> <p>That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</p> <p>That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</p> <p>The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</p> <p>The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</p> <p>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)</p> <p>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</p> <p>About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</p> <p>How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</p> <p>How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</p>
Mental Wellbeing	<p>How to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary.</p> <p>That happiness is linked to being connected to others.</p> <p>How to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns.</p> <p>Common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression).</p> <p>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.</p> <p>The benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness.</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Internet safety and harms	<p>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 information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online.</p> <p>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</p>
Physical health and fitness	<p>The positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>About the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation.</p>
Healthy eating	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>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.</p> <p>The law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances.</p> <p>The physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood.</p> <p>The physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency.</p> <p>Awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks.</p> <p>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.</p>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Health and prevention	<p>About personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics.</p> <p>About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist.</p> <p>(late secondary) The benefits of regular self-examination and screening.</p> <p>The facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination.</p> <p>The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn.</p>
Basic first aid	<p>Basic treatment for common injuries.</p> <p>Life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR.¹</p> <p>The purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed.</p>
Changing adolescent body	<p>Key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing.</p> <p>The main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health.</p>

¹ Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation is usually best taught after 12 years old.

Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

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

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