

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

Non Sibi Sed Aliis

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
Psalm 119, vs 105

"Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance."
1 Corinthians 13: 4-7

This policy document and the content contained therein remains the responsibility of the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. No amendments can be made without their express instructions and they remain the final arbiters in any matters relating to it.

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Reviewed By: Mrs A Wilson

APPROVED BY THE HEADTEACHER – Summer Term 2026

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

What Is Relationship and Sex Education?

RSE is lifelong learning about physical, sexual, moral and emotional development. It involves acquiring knowledge and information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is about the understanding of the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care, for family life.

RATIONALE

The school believes that Relationships and Sex education is an educational entitlement of all students, in line with the DCSF guidance for all schools, and aims to teach this within a Christian framework. From September 2020 Relationships and Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary schools in accordance with The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education regulation 2019.

PRINCIPLES

- To promote the Christian value of the importance of the family and of stable and loving relationships.
- To ensure students are informed about the legal aspects of underage sex and understand the legal age limit for young people.
- To help and support students through their physical, emotional and moral development, fostering a sense of individual self-worth and respect for themselves and for others. The school aims to encourage the development of sensitivity to the needs of others, understanding difference and with an absence of prejudice.
- To help students to acquire the skills for making considered, informed decisions and for accepting the responsibility for the consequences of these decisions.
- To help students to develop their understanding of themselves, their strengths and weaknesses, their attitudes and values.
- To ensure that an intrinsic part of the teaching is not only information but also, at an appropriate level for student maturity and understanding, discussion of attitudes, values, standards and quality of personal relationships. Legal, moral, ethical, religious and cultural aspects of relationships and sex education are addressed in this way.
- To help students to develop the skills and understanding to live healthy lives.
- To help students to learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse.
- To help students access appropriate advice and support when necessary.

GUIDELINES

Relationships and Sex Education at Balshaw's has three main components:

Attitudes and Values

- learning the importance of values, individual conscience and moral choices;

- learning the value of family life, stable and loving relationships, and marriage;
- learning about the nurture of children;
- learning the value of respect, love and care;
- exploring, considering and understanding moral dilemmas;
- developing critical thinking as part of decision-making;
- challenging myths, misconceptions and false assumptions about normal behaviour

Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively;
- developing self-respect and empathy for others;
- learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice;
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- managing conflict;
- empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
- the avoidance of unplanned pregnancy

RSE, the Curriculum and delivery

- Relationships and Sex education does not appear as a subject in its own right. It is a formal part of the school's Personal, Social and Health Education syllabus and as such is taught to all students. In addition there is some content linked to sex and relationships education which is found within National Curriculum subjects, for instance within the Science and RE teaching.
- The course is reviewed each year. Focus is always given to whether the curriculum remains appropriate to students' ages, ability and levels of maturity.
- As RSE is about preparing students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life, it does not encourage early sexual experimentation. In the wider picture of conflicting pressures in society on young people it aims to build confidence, self-esteem and understanding of the benefits of delaying sexual activity.
- The RSE work takes account of links with issues of peer pressure and other risk-taking behaviour, such as alcohol, smoking and illegal drugs.
- The PSHE teachers discuss the work so that expertise can be shared. Specialist staff from outside school are involved in support and staff training. Any health professionals involved in delivering the RSE programme in the classroom situation are expected to work within the school's RSE policy. No members of staff are asked or expected to teach in this area without support unless they both want to and are considered suitable.

- Teaching methods are varied. Case studies with invented characters and the use of appropriate videos and role plays can all be ways of acceptably discussing sensitive issues in a safe environment. Discussion may be in small groups or in the full class. Staff are encouraged to initially establish ground rules for discussion within the groups, with a strong emphasis on acceptance of differences in group members' circumstances and respect for individuals' rights to privacy.
- The RSE programme aims to focus on boys as much as on girls. The teaching is generally carried out in mixed gender groups.
- The school works in partnership with local health and support services, for example Health Promotion specialists, the school nursing service, and the Youth Service. RSE provision in conjunction with the School Nursing Team and relevant outside agencies illustrate the effective links with the school nursing service and aim to contribute to the reduction of teenage conceptions and the promotion of sexual health.
- Health professionals, when they are in their professional role, such as a member of the school nursing service in a consultation with an individual student, will follow their own professional codes of conduct.
- The school aims to work in partnership with parents. This policy was produced in consultation with parents/carers. An outline of our Relationship and Sex Education content is published as part of the PSHE teaching on the school website. Questions regarding PSHE and RSE are included in the Headteacher's parental questionnaires.

Expectations

Staff have the following guidelines for when such questions arise in class. Staff are encouraged to seek guidance from senior staff, prior to responding to questions, where they have concerns or uncertainties regarding what is appropriate for discussion.

- That genuine questions should be considered very carefully. Questions simply designed to shock should be discouraged in a sensible and serious way. Offensive comments should not be permitted. Sexist remarks or offensive references to minority groups should not go unchallenged. Staff should be cautious in dealing with all such matters so as not to leave themselves open to misinterpretation or to put themselves into a vulnerable position.
- Answers should be factual, truthful, objective and balanced and have regard to suitable detail for the age group of students concerned.
- Answers should be in carefully chosen language, avoiding inappropriate vernacular but being as clear and comprehensible as possible.
- Answers should take account of the possible strong moral, religious or cultural viewpoints of students' backgrounds and should in no way undermine these. Students should not be made to feel unusual in their family situation whatever that may be.
- Staff should recognise the legal aspects of the issues raised.
- Staff should never be drawn in to a situation where their personal opinion, as opposed to their professional one, is used to unduly influence students.
- That young people do not ask serious questions unless there is a real need. Where students have actively sought help and advice from a particular teacher to ignore this would be an abdication of professional responsibility.

- That staff must not make unconditional promises of confidentiality as this could lead to a conflict with their legal obligations.
- Students should be reassured that, if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first and then supported as appropriate.
- Students should be informed of sources of confidential help, for example, the school nursing service, GP or local young person's advice service.
- That staff should encourage the student to put the same questions to their parent even though the student may be adamant that this is not possible.
- If a member of staff is unsure of what advice or action to take then advice should be sought from the Designated Safeguarding Lead for Child Protection or from the Headteacher.
- If a member of staff is concerned that a student is at risk of sexual abuse, they should follow the school's safeguarding child protection policy and procedures.

Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups, in accordance with the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, under which religion and belief are protected characteristics. We will respond to parental and/or student queries in order to allay any concerns that may exist about the RSE curriculum.

Students with Special Needs

We will ensure that all young people receive sex and relationship education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality need to feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them. In line with the school's policy for inclusion, Balshaw's endorses the view given in Government guidance on RSE contained in The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education & Health Education (England) regulation 2019. This states that 'In teaching RSE schools should ensure that the needs of all pupils are met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect. Schools must comply with the relevant provision of the Equality Act 2010 under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are protected characteristics. At the point at which schools consider appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programme of study. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as a part of this area of the curriculum. The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.' Students may turn to staff as trusted adults with questions of personal or sexual matters whether or not the member of staff has a responsibility in this area and regardless of whether the issue arises in a formal lesson.

Right of Withdrawal of Students from Relationships and Sex Education

Some parents or carers prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of a student's education. They have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE, except for those parts included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e., the study of human growth and reproduction in Science lessons). We would make alternative arrangements for students in such cases. This applies up to and until three terms before the student turns 16. After that point, if the student wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school will make arrangements to provide the student with sex education during one of those terms.

Parents and carers are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity. Parents and carers are welcome to review any RSE resources the school uses.

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and this should never be offered to students.

In a case where a teacher learns from a student under the age of consent that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- primarily, the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to their parents and if necessary to seek medical advice
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the school's procedures
- the young person will be properly counselled about where young people can access sexual relationship and advice services e.g.: Brook Advisory Service.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands the circumstances where confidentiality can be broken.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in one-to-one situations with students, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Sex and Relationship Education

It is the responsibility of the PSHE Subject Lead/Pastoral Deputy Headteacher to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE, in the context of overall school policies for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The PSHE programme will undertake self-evaluation and monitoring through the usual school cycle.

This policy was produced in accordance with The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) regulation 2019 and in consultation with staff, students, parents, carers, and governors.

The Governors and Leadership Team are responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationships and Sex Education Policy.

Ofsted is required to evaluate and report on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. This includes evaluating and commenting on the school's sex and relationship education policy, and on support and staff development, training and delivery.

Other Policies and Documents with relevance to RSE are:

- Equality Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Personal, Social, Health Education Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures
- Drugs Education Policy
- Curriculum Policy

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