



Relationships and Sex Education Policy: Secondary phase

Member of Staff Responsible	Chief executive Officer
Relevant guidance/advice/legal reference	Relationship Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education, published by the DfE, 2019
Approved by	Board of Trustees (Section 1) and LGB, Appendix 2
Date of Policy	October 2023
Review Cycle	1 year
Date of Next Review	October 2024
Website	Yes

This policy is divided into two sections.

The main body of the policy: This establishes the ethos, standard procedure of consultation for development and the statement of intention of our trust (applying to all schools) with respect to how we approach Relationships and Sex Education. It is approved by the Board of Trustees.

Appendices 1-3: Appendices 1 and 3 are approved by the trust. Appendix 2, which represents the detail of the delivery of the curriculum is written by the school and approved by the Local Governing Body.

Section 1:

1.1 Statement of intent

Effective Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is essential if students are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. (*Relationship and Sex Education, DfES*).

1.2 Statutory requirements

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education.

1.3 Aims

- The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our school are to: Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Give students 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
- Respond to the diversity of children's cultures, faiths and family backgrounds.

1.4 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 Priory School, we teach RSE as set out in this policy – see SECTION 2

1.5 Policy Development (consultation and approval)

Given each school has its own relationship with stakeholders, this policy (at trust level) sets out below the consultation process for policy development. It is for the school to oversee and the consultation relates to the information in SECTION 2, which is specific for each school.

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

- Review – a member of staff or working group pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – parents and any interested parties were invited to comment on the policy. The school may decide to hold a meeting, but this is not a statutory requirement.
- Student consultation – a school will consult with its student population
- Ratification (See **Roles and Responsibilities (1.9)**) - once amendments were made (including those by the local governing body), the policy was approved. The Local Governing Body approve the implementation on of this policy (SECTION 2); the trust Board approve the principles which govern the policy (SECTION 1).

1.6 Definition

Relationship and Sex Education is learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about understanding the importance of stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also involves learning about sexuality, sexual health, 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.

1.6.1 Equal Opportunities

We value equality of opportunity highly. The RSE curriculum offers children the opportunity to discuss attitudes and values relating to equality issues and the protected characteristics of age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership or sexual orientation.

As part of our whole school approach, our RSE programme fosters gender and LGBTQ+ equality, challenging all forms of discrimination and bullying. We are respectful of how students choose to identify themselves, understanding that their sexual orientation and gender identity may be emerging and fluid.

1.6.2 Safeguarding

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is, and what is not, appropriate in a relationship can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue.

Confidentiality must not prevent action if the child is 'at risk'. Teachers will listen to anything a child tells them in confidence. However, if a teacher feels that a child is at risk then the appropriate

people will be contacted in accordance with the Child Protection Policy.

1.7 Delivery of the RSE programme

Delivery of our curriculum is set out in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 indicates the knowledge and understanding framework around which the curriculum is built. although occasional adaptation may be necessary on a short-term basis (and we will not consult on this because it will be an operational, rather than strategic decision). RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

- We have developed the curriculum to take account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If they ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed. We will endeavour to do this in a way that means our students do not need to seek answers online.
- The use of offensive and sexualised language (swear and slang terms, including homophobic language) and behaviour will be addressed with students and as appropriate, parents/carers will be involved in accordance with our behaviour policy.
- Students' questions will be responded to by staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) as they arise in a straightforward manner. Information will be provided, using correct terminology for body parts and functions, appropriate to the age and maturity of the student.

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 Appendix 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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 will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

1.8 Use of external agencies (if appropriate for our school)

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy,

the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

1.9 Roles and responsibilities

1.9.1 Board of Trustees and the local governing body of each school

The Board of Trustees approves SECTION 1. The Local Governing Body will receive the entire policy (including SECTION 2) and will hold the headteacher to account for its implementation. The LGB will help to influence SECTION 2 through the consultation process and will hold the headteacher to account for the implementation of this policy.

1.9.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from components of RSE (see section 1.10).

1.9.3 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 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 headteacher.

RSE is predominantly taught through the Life programme and tutor sessions, the key staff responsible for delivering these sessions are

Blower, Wendy

Bowers, Sarah

Byrne, David

Crampton, Gayle

Deery, Liam

Donegan, Lucy

Dowling, Thomas

Eady, Alison

Edge, Leyon

Fletcher, Sarah

France, Carol

Goodwright, Sarah

Hayman-Bant, Tamara

Jennings, Patrick
Joao, Sian
Jones, Westleigh
Lamprell, Clare
Lee, Kathryn
Oram, Tanya
Painter, Adrian
Roberts, Frankie
Saunders-Brown, Jess
Selman, Kevin
Sherrred, James
Stacey, Peter
Statham, Charlotte
Talbot, Lucy
Thompson, Sara
Wright, Stuart
Yarnell, Sarah

1.9.4 Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity.

1.9.5 Parents/carers

Parents/carers have a key role in offering advice. In doing so, they may wish to refer to the policy and contact the school, in order to support the school in this respect.

1.9.6 The role of Health Professionals

Health professionals who are involved in delivering programmes are expected to work within the schools' RSE policy and on the instructions of the headteacher. However, when they are in their professional role, such as a school nurse in a consultation with an individual student, they should follow their own professional code of conduct.

Health Professionals may:

- Work closely with teachers in supporting RSE in school (complementing the role of the teacher)
- Help schools work in partnership with parents/carers and make links between the school and other relevant professionals and services such as local GPs, family planning clinics, Genito-Urinary (GU) clinics etc.
- Tell students about the health services that are available in the area and help them develop the confidence and skills to make good use of them
- Give students confidential support and advice, through services such as the drop- in sessions

- Provide specific and up-to-date knowledge about sexual health and well-being and contraception
- Parents/carers may find it difficult to talk to their children about sex and relationships and therefore they need support in their role, in which case they should actively seek help from the school or other professional agencies (such as their GP).

1.10 Parents right to Withdraw

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education regulations 2019 (made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) confirms the 1996 Education Act that parents have the right to withdraw their child from part, or all, of the sex education programme that does not form part of the science education curriculum. There is **no parental right** of withdrawal from the relationship education, nor from the sex education curriculum that includes understanding the adolescent body.

Parents **do** have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non science components of sex education within RSE.

Parental withdrawal applies up to three terms before a student is sixteen, at which point the student can decide for themselves.

We would encourage parents to discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity. Any such request from a parent/carer to withdraw a student should be made in writing to the school. Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 1 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative school work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

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	Notes on agreed actions

Statement of intent

Effective Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) is essential if students are to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. To embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, students need knowledge that will enable them to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy. Students can also put this knowledge into practice as they develop the capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts. (*Relationship and Sex Education, DfES*)

Delivery of the RSE programme at The Priory School

The main delivery of the RSE programme will be through the timetabled 'Life' lesson, which is taught by a dedicated team of teachers. A range of professionals, including health professionals and teaching staff with expertise in this area, will be invited to contribute to the RSE programme as appropriate. RSE is also delivered through science lessons.

Whilst delivering the programme:

- The use of offensive and sexualised language (swear and slang terms, including homophobic language) and behaviour will be addressed with students and as appropriate, parents/carers will be involved in accordance with our behaviour policy
- Students' questions will be responded to by staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) as they arise in a straightforward manner. Information will be provided, using correct terminology for body parts and functions, appropriate to the age and maturity of the student.
- The needs of students with special learning difficulties may be met by additional teaching provided by specialist staff within the Learning Support Department. It is recognised that SEND students may require additional support on the RSE curriculum and can be at increased risk of exploitation. Individual support or targeted programmes may be considered. Parents and students will be involved and consulted
- In most circumstances, RSE will be delivered to mixed sex groups. On some occasions it may prove appropriate for the Head of Department of Life to organise single sex groups for certain topics.
- Liaison through the Shropshire Council Health Development Officer with the main feeder primary schools will take place to provide continuity of the RSE provision
- There will be a clear focus on lesson planning and time is provided for teachers to enable them to do this effectively.
- Establish a climate that encourages students to express their views and feelings and to respect the views of others, with clearly established boundaries for courtesy and confidentiality.
- Use effective teaching methods that include good use of resources and that give students the opportunity to reflect on and assimilate their learning
- Create opportunities to assess students' knowledge and understanding and development their values and attitudes and personal skills
- Introduce topics with a whole a year group, forms or small groups as appropriate.
- Health professionals, such as the school nurse support via Priory School Health and Advice (CHAT), Local Community Support Officers may be used to support the role of the teacher by supplying lead sessions, team teaching and in-service training to ensure confidence in subject knowledge.
- Baseline assessments will be established prior to modules starting and revisited at end to check understanding and confidence to seek advice

Teaching strategies for RSE

It is essential that schools can help children and students develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about sex and relationships.

We use a number of teaching strategies recognised as good practice that can help this including:

- Establishing ground rules
- Using third person 'distancing' techniques
- A question box and clear policy on responding to and answering questions or comments from students
- Discussion and project learning methods and appropriate materials
- Encouraging reflection and review on an individual and class basis

Content of the RSE programme

(The expectations of what students should know by the end of their time with us can be found in Appendix 1)

In planning and presenting an RSE programme, students should have the opportunity to express themselves within a trusted and safe environment. They need to articulate their thoughts, doubts and anxieties in order that they can build the skills needed to make responsible decisions, communicate effectively and develop healthy and appropriate relationships.

Topics by year group:

Year 7	Health and Hygiene Puberty Media Body image Growing up and life cycles Female genital mutilation (FGM)
Year 8	Consent Friendships Homophobic bullying Challenging stereotypes Peer pressure Sexual harassment: to include peer on peer abuse (external)
Year 9	Consent Body image Contraception – condoms 'Sexting' and social media Internet safety – staying safe online Child Sexual Exploitation
Year 10	Contraception Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) Cancer: Prostate, testicular, breast and cervical FGM Abortion Harassment and consent Child Sexual Exploitation
Year 11	Emotional aspects of sex HIV/AIDS Contraception, including emergency contraception Child Sexual Exploitation Pregnancy, child birth, parenting

Specific Issues

Sensitive and controversial issues within sex education will inevitably arise. Topics such as contraception, abortion, HIV / AIDS, sexual orientation, sexual harassment, will arise as part of the planned curriculum or be introduced by the students themselves during discussion or group work.

In these situations, teachers should present such issues in a broad and balanced way, free from sensationalism and personal bias and in a supportive climate, which allows for objective discussion.

The following statements reflect the School's attitude to these sensitive issues:

- (i) Contraception
Teachers may give information about contraception as part of class or group work. They may not provide personal advice to students under 16 years.
A teacher approached by an individual student for specific advice on contraception should, wherever possible, encourage the student to seek advice from his or her parent/carer, and, if appropriate, from the relevant health service professional. Priority Health and Advice services are available onsite, such as the CHAT service for years 9-11.
- (ii) Abortion
Students are presented with a balanced view which respects a range of religious and family beliefs and they will also be made aware of the Law on abortion. Students are encouraged to arrive at their own informed viewpoint on this issue.
Sexual Abuse
Should a student take the opportunity to disclose information concerning sexual abuse, the School's child protection team will be immediately informed.
The Shropshire safeguarding procedures will then be followed fully.
- (iii) Sexual Harassment
This includes name-calling and sexual innuendoes as well as action such as unwelcome touching. Students are given the opportunity to discuss the unacceptability of such behaviour and helped to develop skills to cope with it, should it occur.

The procedures for dealing with this issue are laid down in the School's policy statement on Anti-Bullying.
- (iv) Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)
It is a compulsory part of sex education to include HIV and other STIs. Teachers may give information about HIV and STIs as part of class or group work on safer sex. They may not provide personal advice to students under 16 years.
A teacher should, if approached by a student for specific advice, encourage the student to seek advice from parents/carers and relevant health service professionals. They may give sources of relevant health professionals such as CHAT Priority Health and Advice services
- (v) Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
The school aims to raise awareness among both students and staff about the warning signs of FGM. Staff are legally required to report known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police.

Science curriculum

The National Curriculum for Science specifies what students should be taught at each stage.

Key Stage 3

- Reproduction in humans (as an example of a mammal), including the structure and function of the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle (without details of hormones), gametes, fertilisation, gestation and birth, to include the effect of maternal lifestyle on the foetus through the placenta.

Key Stage 4

- The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones
- Hormones in human reproduction, hormonal and non-hormonal methods of contraception
- Some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility
- The defence mechanisms of the body
- How sex is determined in humans
- The relationship between health and disease
- Communicable diseases including sexually transmitted infections in humans (including HIV/AIDS)

Parents right to Withdraw:

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education regulations 2019 (made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017) confirms the 1996 Education Act that parents have the right to withdraw their child from part, or all, of the sex education programme that does not form part of the science education curriculum. There is no parental right of withdrawal from the relationship, and sex, education curriculum, which includes understanding adolescent body. Parental withdrawal applies up to three terms before a student is sixteen, at this point the student can decide for themselves.

Any such request from a parent/carer to withdraw a student should be made in writing to the school. We would encourage parents to discuss any concerns at the earliest opportunity.

General information

- The school has made adequate and sensitive arrangements to help girls to cope with menstruation and with requests for sanitary protection
- Students can access information about the health services that are available in the area from visiting health professionals, student support and leaflets and posters distributed by the school

By the end of secondary school students should know

TOPIC	STUDENTS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<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	<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 different (non-sexual) types of relationship • 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	<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

	<p>further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 offence which carries severe penalties including jail • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online
Being safe	<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	<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 sexual behaviour • How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment