



Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form

Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Implementation Date:	May 2024
Last reviewed:	May 2024
Next review date	May 2026
Ratified Committee	May 2024
Designated Postholder	Assistant Headteacher

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (RSE Policy)

Aims and Objectives

Aims

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

Links with other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- BAT Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- E-Safety Guidance
- BAT Student Equality Policy

Statutory Guidance

The Relationships and Sex Education Policy has been developed in accordance with the current requirements of the law, taking into account the Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and the Education Act 1993 and 2002. The 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. The regulations also make Health Education compulsory in Academies.

All secondary schools must provide relationship and sex education (including education about sexually transmitted disease such as HIV and AIDS and child protection issues such as FGM and child sexual exploitation) and must teach human growth and reproduction as set out in the national curriculum. This is a statutory requirement.

Definition

Children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, 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 in order to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is available via the school website and will be reviewed and adapted as and when necessary. We have developed the curriculum taking into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner and will address any misconceptions. The school will inform parents and carers of the topics covered to do with RSE and when they will be taught at the beginning of each half term.

Delivery of RSE

At Notley High School & Braintree Sixth Form, RSE is delivered through a variety of methods including PDT/TP1 lessons, assemblies, and additional sessions using external providers to give the students up to date factual information and advice, as part of a coherent and planned programme.

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

The RSE curriculum is designed to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage, civil partnership or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

We will build on the foundation taught in primary schools in Relationships Education (Appendix 1) and, as students grow up, at the appropriate time extend teaching to include intimate relationships. Alongside being taught intimate relationships, students will also be taught about family relationships, friendships and other kinds of relationships that are an equally important part of becoming a successful and happy adult.

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).

For more information about what students should know by the end of secondary school, please see Appendix 2.

Equality

In line with the Equality Policy, all students have access, subject to parental rights to withdraw their child, to the Sex and Relationship Education programme. Resources for students with special educational needs are made available.

Specific Issues Statements

Contraceptive advice, information and referrals for students who are under 16

DfE circular 5/94 points out the “importance of distinguishing between providing education generally about sexual matters and counselling and advice to individual students on these issues, particularly when it relates to their own sexual behaviour.”

Care must be exercised in relation to contraceptive advice given to individual students under 16, for whom sexual intercourse is unlawful. Giving individual advice on contraception is therefore an inappropriate exercise of a teacher’s professional responsibilities. If approached by an individual student for specific advice then the teacher must encourage the student to seek advice from parents or a health service professional. If a teacher believes that the student is at moral or physical risk or is breaking the law, then they must ensure that the student is aware of the implications and is urged to seek advice. In these circumstances the Safeguarding Lead or Deputy Safeguarding Leads should be informed.

Issues relating to sex education in different areas of the curriculum

It is inevitable that the teaching of unrelated topics will occasionally lead to a discussion of aspects of sexual behaviour. As long as it is set within the context of the subject concerned, it will not constitute part of a sex and relationship education programme. Teachers will need however, to exercise their discretion and judgement in managing these discussions, ensuring that they remain relevant to the context of the subject. In the course of such discussions, if individuals raise explicit issues, it may be inappropriate to speak individually to the student before consulting parents/carers. To avoid being in a compromising position, it is recommended that the teacher is accompanied by another teacher, if it becomes necessary to speak to individuals. This is likely to be the student’s tutor/co-tutor, Pastoral Manager or Raising Standards Leader depending on the circumstances.

Child Sexual Abuse Procedure

In cases of suspected child abuse, the procedures laid down by the school must be followed. The named person should be informed immediately. The procedures are clearly stated in the Child Protection Policy.

Confidentiality

In relation to any discussion relating to Sex and Relationship Education, absolute confidentiality cannot be promised to students. All staff in the school, supply teachers, students and visitors are made aware of this. In the classroom “ground rules”, should include no students or staff member having to answer personal questions, all issues to be raised in the third person.

Complaints procedure

Any complaints regarding the teaching of the Sex and Relationship Education programme should be made to the PDT, PSHE and Careers Faculty Leader in the first instance. If any matter cannot be resolved, then the issue should be referred to the Senior Link for the area.

Procedures for the involvement of health professionals and visitors

Guidance on the Sex and Relationship Education programme is encouraged from health authorities, school nurses and GPs as part of a co-operative programme to help young people develop into responsible adults. Where these professionals are involved in the classroom, we ensure that they are made aware of the school's Relationship and Sex Education Policy and are prepared to work according to it.

Working with parents/carers

The relationship and sex education of young people is not the responsibility of the school alone. We aim to work in partnership with parents/carers, and it is hoped that parents/carers will be able to support the school's approach to relationship and sex education. The school endeavours to help parents/carers in their own role, by providing information, materials, and opportunity to view materials and to talk to staff involved about how they are used.

Roles and responsibilities

The governing committee

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

The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory of RSE.

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 nonstatutory 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.

The teaching and learning of RSE is overseen by the PDT Faculty Leader, Michelle Robb

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 and carers have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory 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 and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

Training

Regular training and updates are provided by the Faculty Leader. The Faculty Leader 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 arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Faculty Leader through planning discussions with staff, learning walks, lesson observations, student voice and exercise book monitoring.

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

Dissemination of the policy

The policy is distributed to all governors and staff. A discussion on the implications of the policy will take place for staff before distribution. Where appropriate visitors are issued with a copy. Copies of the policy are available for inspection by parents/carers and a copy will be placed on the school's website.

The Faculty Leader for PDT, PSHE and Careers will review the materials and resources used in the Sex and Relationship Education programme at least annually to check their suitability.

Appendix 1

RSE expectations: By the end of primary school, students should know:

Families and people who care for me

- that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability.
- the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives.
- that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care.

- that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up.
- that marriage¹³ represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong.
- how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.

Caring friendships

- how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends.
- the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties.
- that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded.
- that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right.
- how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships

- the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs.
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- the conventions of courtesy and manners.
- the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness.
- 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 those in positions of authority.
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help.
- what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive.
- the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.

Online relationships

- that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not.
- that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous.
- the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them.
- how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met.
- how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe

- what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context).
- about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe.
- that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact.
- how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know.
- how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult.
- how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard.
- how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so.
- where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources

Appendix 2

RSE expectations: By the end of secondary school, students should know:

Families

- 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

- 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

- 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 offence which carries severe penalties including jail.
- how information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being safe

- 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

- 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 and menopause.
- 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.