

Relationships, Sex & Health Education Policy (RSHE)

Brigshaw High School

Monitoring and Review of this Document:

The Trust shall be responsible for reviewing this document from time to time to ensure that it meets legal requirements and reflects best practice.



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Introduction

1. Statutory Requirements

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

In teaching RSHE, 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 404 to 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) (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

Refer to your funding agreement and articles of association for more information.

At Brigshaw High School, we teach RSHE as set out in this policy.

All schools are required to teach Relationships Education as part of the personal, social, health, economic (PSHE) curriculum as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

Relationships, Sex & Health Education is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE).

A comprehensive programme of RSHE provides accurate information about the body; reproduction; sex, and sexual health. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, meaningful and non-exploitative relationships that are based on respect, care and empathy. We want children to be able to make responsible and well-informed decisions about their lives. We want children to have knowledge, skills and understanding to keep themselves and others safe both on and offline.

In teaching RSHE, we are 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](#).

2. Aims and Objectives

Our RSHE and health education programme provides a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place to help pupils to develop the knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes they need to live confident, healthy, independent lives now and in the future.

Effective RSHE does not encourage early sexual experimentation or sexual orientation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time.

RSHE contributes to the foundation of PSHE and Citizenship by ensuring that all pupils:

- develop confidence in talking, listening and thinking about their feelings and relationships
- are supported through their physical, emotional and moral development
- are helped to deal with difficult moral and social questions



- respect themselves and others and move with confidence from adolescence to adulthood
- understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa
- learn to manage emotions and relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, confidently and sensitively with self-respect and empathy
- learn how to avoid and not initiate exploitation and abuse e.g. bullying
- learn to make choices and have an awareness of consequences based on an appreciation of difference and absence of prejudice
- learn how to participate in positive relationships in a considerate and sensitive way, valuing respect and care for self and others
- learn how to cope with loss at the end of relationships
- explore individual and moral issues and develop decision making skills based upon critical thinking
- develop safe, healthy, informed and tolerant attitudes towards sex and relationships, understanding the importance of safe, secure and stable relationships as key building blocks of community and society
- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide pupils' decisions, judgments and behaviour
- can protect themselves and ask for help and support; and
- cultivate and practice resilience and other character traits in the individual. These should include traits such as belief in achieving goals and persevering with tasks, as well as personal attributes such as honesty, integrity, courage, humility, kindness, generosity, trustworthiness and a sense of justice
- understand key aspects of the law relating to sex to include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.

The aims of relationships, sex & health education (RSHE) at our school are to:

- Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- Prepare pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy, and cultivate positive characteristics such as kindness and integrity
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

RSHE relates to our school values of respect, integrity, equality and resilience by fostering an inclusive environment where protected characteristics are respected, stereotypes are challenged and coping strategies are explicitly taught.

3. Principles

RSHE is a partnership between home and school. It is relevant to pupils at each stage in their development and maturity. Effective RSHE is essential if young people are to make responsible and well-informed decisions.

There are three main elements of RSHE

Attitudes and Values

- learn the importance of values and individual conscience and moral considerations
- learn the value of family life, marriage, and stable and loving relationships for the nurture of children
- learn the value of respect, love and care
- explore, consider and understand moral dilemmas
- develop critical thinking as part of decision-making

Personal and Social Skills

- develop the ability to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively



- develop self-respect and empathy for others
- develop the ability to make choices based on an understanding of difference and with an absence of prejudice
- develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- manage conflict
- learn how to recognise and avoid exploitation and abuse

Knowledge and Understanding

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

Additional Aims

- raise pupils' self-esteem and confidence
- develop communication and assertiveness skills that can help them stay true to their values if challenged by others, their peers or what they see in the media
- teach pupils to be accepting of the different beliefs, cultures, religions, sexual orientations, gender identity, physical and mental abilities, backgrounds and values of those around them
- support pupils to lead a healthy and safe lifestyle, teaching them to care for, and respect, their bodies
- provide pupils with the right tools to enable them to seek information or support, should they need it
- teach pupils about consent and their right to say no, in an age-appropriate manner
- to teach lessons that are sensitive to a range of views, values and beliefs
- ensure that staff teaching RSHE remain neutral in their delivery whilst ensuring that pupils always have access to the learning, they need to stay safe, healthy and understand their rights as individuals

In consultation with parents, carers and the Local School Committee, RSHE will be delivered by RSHE is a partnership

- The planned RSHE modules across all phases
- National Curriculum science
- RE curriculum
- PSHE

4. Policy development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents/carers. 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/carers and any interested parties were invited to attend a meeting about the policy
- Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE



5. Definition

RSHE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of pupils, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSHE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSHE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

6. Curriculum

Our RSHE curriculum is set out as per Appendices 1 and 2, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents and carers, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs (such as cultural and religious needs) and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

We will share all curriculum materials with parents and carers on request.

7. Delivery of RSHE

RSHE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSHE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

The school will make sure that:

- Core knowledge is sectioned into units of manageable size
- The required content is communicated to pupils clearly, in a carefully sequenced way and within a planned scheme of work

Teaching includes sufficient and well-chosen opportunities and contexts for pupils to embed new knowledge, so that it can be used confidently in real-life situations

RSHE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships, including:

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

RSHE complements several other curriculum subjects. Where appropriate, the school will look for opportunities to make links between the subjects and integrate teaching. The RSHE curriculum will be delivered by appropriately trained members of staff.

Teachers will make sure that pupils understand the importance of equality and respect, and learn about the law relating to the protected characteristics, as set out in the Equality Act 2010, by the end of their secondary education. The curriculum is designed to ensure that all pupils are treated with dignity and respect, and that teaching about sex, sexuality, sexual orientation, gender reassignment and gender identity is factual, age-appropriate, inclusive and impartial.

Throughout each year group we will use appropriate material to assist learning, such as:

- Diagrams
- Videos



- Books
- Games
- Discussions and practical activities

Teachers will make sure that all pupils' views are listened to, and will encourage them to ask questions and engage in discussion. Teachers will answer questions sensitively, honestly and appropriately for the age of the pupils.

The programme will be designed to focus on boys as much as girls, and activities will be planned to make sure both are actively involved.

The school will make sure that all teaching and materials are appropriate for the ages and needs of the pupils including any additional needs, such as special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

1. Baseline Quality Assurance of External Materials

The secondary RSHE curriculum utilises primary resources and lesson frameworks from the [Oak National Academy](#), developed in partnership with secondary specialists [Life Lessons](#). These core materials are formally pre-vetted by our RSHE Lead and the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) to ensure they are:

- Statutorily Compliant: Mapped directly to the DfE's statutory secondary RSHE requirements.
- Age-Appropriate: Sequenced precisely to align with secondary developmental milestones and legal age boundaries.
- Evidence-Informed: Structured using cognitive load theory to ensure safe, structured delivery of sensitive topics.

2. Internal Vetting and Secondary Contextual Assessment

While Oak National Academy resources serve as our quality baseline, no resource is used unexamined. Prior to the delivery of each unit, the RSHE Subject Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) formally assesses the materials against the following school-level criteria:

- Age and Maturity Vetting: Confirming that sensitive secondary topics (such as sexual health, relationships, and online harms) match the emotional maturity of the specific year group.
- Contextual Adaptation: Editing flexible Oak slides, case studies, or vocabulary to align with our local safeguarding data, school ethos, and cohort demographics.
- SEND and Inclusion Review: Adapting activities and language to ensure content is fully accessible for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

3. Protocols for Assessing and Vetting External Guest Speakers

BHS occasionally invites external agencies or guest speakers to enrich and supplement our core curriculum. In strict alignment with DfE requirements, external input will never substitute planned teacher-led lessons. Prior to any speaker being booked, the school implements a mandatory four-step vetting process:

- Pre-Approval of Materials: The guest speaker must submit all presentation slides, handouts, and session plans to the RSHE Subject Lead at least four weeks prior to the event. No unapproved material may be shared with students.
- Political Impartiality & Ethos Check: The school will conduct background searches to ensure the speaker or agency does not promote extreme political positions, undermine community cohesion, or conflict with our legal duties on political impartiality.



- Safeguarding and Presence: All external visits must comply with our standard [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE\)](#) protocols. A qualified school teacher will remain in the classroom at all times during the session and is authorized to stop the presentation if classroom safe-delivery rules are breached.
- Avoidance of Commercial Restrictions: The school will not sign any commercial or non-disclosure agreements with external agencies that restrict a parent's right to view the materials used.

4. Sign-Off and Parental Transparency

- SLT Sign-Off: The complete curriculum map, inclusive of adapted Oak resources and proposed guest speaker materials, must be formally signed off by a designated member of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) before teaching begins..
- Parental Inspection Rights: In line with the statutory right to transparency, parents will be notified in advance of any external speakers. Parents retain the right to inspect all Oak Academy materials,

At all points of delivery of the curriculum, the school will consult parents and carers, and their views will be valued. What will be taught and how will be planned in conjunction with parents and carers.

Pupils will be assessed through a range of formative strategies such as For 5 retrieval questions at the beginning of each lesson, use of MWBs to check for all class understanding, regular questioning and check and change activities. Students will also complete a summative assessment at the end of the year.

It is important for secondary pupils to know what the law says about certain topics covered in RSE, particularly in relation to the law and young people. This will help pupils identify what is right and wrong, and can provide a foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion. These topics include, but are not limited to:

- Marriage, including forced marriage and civil partnerships
- Consent, including the age of consent
- Domestic abuse, stalking, rape, sexual offences, female genital mutilation (FGM), 'virginity testing' and hymenoplasty
- Sexual abuse, harassment and exploitation, including public sexual harassment and harmful sexual behaviour
- Online behaviours including image and information sharing (including sexual imagery, youth-produced sexual imagery and including AI-generated sexual imagery and deepfakes). Pupils should understand the law about online sexual harassment and online sexual abuse, including grooming and sextortion
- Pornography
- Abortion
- The protected characteristics
- The age of criminal responsibility

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

We may amend our curriculum content to respond to the needs and context of our pupils, to discuss issues affecting them in an age-appropriate manner. We will inform parents and carers of any deviation from our published policy in advance, and share any relevant materials on request.

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 (i.e. families can include single-parent families, same-sex parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents among other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some children may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children, young carers or kinship carers).



Across our school, we will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property or hate crime.

8. Teaching about biological sex, gender reassignment and gender identity

In line with statutory RSHE guidance, our school will teach the facts and the law about biological sex, sexuality, sexual health, gender reassignment and gender identity in an age-appropriate, inclusive, factual and respectful way.

Teaching will be impartial and will not present contested views as established fact. Pupils will be taught about the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, including sex, sexual orientation and gender reassignment, and about the importance of respect for others, including those with different views and beliefs.

Where gender identity is discussed, this will be handled carefully and sensitively. The school will not use resources that oversimplify complex issues, reinforce sex stereotypes, or suggest that clothing, hobbies, interests or personality determine a person's sex or gender. Staff will avoid materials or approaches that present the idea that all people have a separate gender identity as fact.

The school will teach pupils the facts about biological sex, the relevant law, and the importance of treating everyone with dignity and respect. Teaching will not encourage pupils to question their gender, nor will it endorse a particular ideological position.

The school will review all RSHE resources before use to ensure they are age-appropriate, evidence-informed, aligned with statutory guidance, and suitable for the needs and maturity of pupils. Where external providers or resources are used, the school will retain responsibility for the content delivered. Parents and carers will be consulted when the RSHE policy is reviewed and may view curriculum materials on request.

9. Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of pupils will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all pupils' experiences
- During lessons, makes pupils feel:
 - Safe and supported
 - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that pupils learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
 - A whole-class setting
 - Small groups or targeted sessions
 - 1-to-1 discussions
 - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed



10. Use of resources

We will consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support pupils in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age and maturity of the pupils
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

We will make sure that when we consult parents/carers we provide examples of the resources that the school plans to use.

11. Responding to Children's Diverse Learning Needs

There is a great need for sensitivity in the approach to relationship and sex education. This will include sensitivity to:

- religious and cultural diversity
- differing needs of boys and girls
- diverse sexuality of young people
- homophobic bullying and behaviour

Inclusive RSHE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice and promote understanding and respect. There will be an equality of opportunity for boys and girls and teachers will ensure that there is no stigmatisation of pupils based on home circumstances.

12. Use of external organisations and materials

Brigshaw High School 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.

Brigshaw High School **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSHE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
- Are age-appropriate
- Are in line with student's' developmental stage
- Comply with:
 - This policy
 - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
 - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
 - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
 - The [Education Act 1996](#)



- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with

Be clear on:

- What they're going to say
- Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

Our school **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme
- Inform all external organisations that the school is legally obliged to share all content with parents and carers
- Share all external materials with parents and carers

13.Roles and Responsibilities

The Local School Committee (LSC)

The school's LSC 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 pupils from [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE.

Designated Safeguarding Lead

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Designated Safeguarding Lead through activities such as planning scrutinies, learning walks and pupil voice.

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSHE
- Monitoring progress



- Responding to the needs of individual pupils, providing high quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised to ensure accessibility
- It is the role of the teacher to ensure that children with learning difficulties and special needs are properly included and their developmental needs met.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE
- Pupils' development in RSHE is monitored by class teachers and form tutors as part of our internal assessment systems

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the Headteacher.

Parents/Carers

The school believes that the primary role in children's RSHE lies with the parents and carers. We wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of the children at our school through mutual understanding, trust and co-operation. **In promoting this objective, we:**

- consult with parents and other stakeholders about the new RSHE policy
- inform parents/carers about the school's practice and the resources used in its teaching;
- answer any questions that parents/carers may have about the RSHE of their child;
- take seriously any issues that parents/carers raise with teachers or the LSC about this policy or the arrangements for RSHE within the school;
- inform parents/carers about the best practice known with regard to RSHE so that the teaching in school supports the key messages that parents/carers give to children at home. We believe that, through this mutual exchange of knowledge and information, children will benefit from being given consistent messages about their changing body and their increasing responsibilities

Pupils

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



14. Right of withdrawal

Parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of sex education within RSHE up to and until 3 terms before the pupil turns 16. After this point, if the pupil 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 3 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of any withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents/carers and take appropriate action and provide the parents/carers with their decision in writing.

In exceptional circumstances, for example because of a safeguarding concern or a pupil's specific vulnerability, the headteacher can refuse a request to withdraw the pupil from sex education.

Alternative schoolwork will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

15. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and as part of their ongoing continuing professional development. Teachers of PSHE attend subject pedagogy meetings throughout the year dedicated to the high quality teaching of RSHE/PSHE. Where appropriate, visitors from outside the school, such as health professionals will be invited in to provide support and training to staff teaching RSHE.

16. Managing Disclosure

Teachers are aware of their responsibility to minimise the chance of pupils making disclosures in the class by using ground rules, distancing techniques and other recognised methods.

Distancing techniques may avoid embarrassment and protect pupils' privacy. Depersonalising discussion, appropriate videos and TV extracts, case studies with invented characters can all help pupils discuss sensitive issues that develop their decision-making skills in a safe environment.

17. Confidentiality

[Please refer to Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy](#)

Teachers conduct RSHE lessons in a sensitive manner and in confidence. It is the policy of the school to answer children's questions as they arise in an honest and caring manner, encouraging the use of correct physiological terms as appropriate to the age and needs of the individual child. If a question is deemed inappropriate for the age and understanding of the child, the child will be referred to their parents. However, if a child refers to being involved, or likely to be involved in sexual activity, then the teacher will take the matter seriously and deal with it as a matter of child protection. Teachers will respond in a similar way if a child indicates that they may have been a victim of abuse. In these circumstances, the teacher will follow the procedures in the school's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy. The designated person will deal with the matter in accordance with this policy.

18. Equal Opportunities

We will do all we can to ensure that this policy does not discriminate, directly or indirectly. We shall do this through regular monitoring and evaluation of our policies. On review, we shall assess and consult relevant



stakeholders on the likely impact of our policies on the promotion of all aspects of equality, as laid down in the [Equality Act \(2010\)](#).

19. Complaints

An individual wishing to make a complaint about anything relating to this policy should refer to the [BLP Complaint Policy published](#) on our website.

20. Links With Other Policies and Documents

This policy is linked to the following policies and documents:

<https://www.brigshaw.com/statutory/policies>

- Special Educational Needs Disability Policy (SEND Policy)
- SEND information report
- The local offer
- Accessibility plan
- Public Sector Equality Duty: Equality information and objectives statement for publication
- Supporting pupils with medical needs policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Needs Who Cannot Attend School Policy
- First Aid
- Behaviour policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding / child protection policy
- Risk Assessment Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaint's policy

21. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSHE is monitored by Duncan Roberts, Head teacher, through:

- Termly Lesson drop ins by the PSHE lead and SLT team with a focus on curriculum delivery, impact and behaviour
- Book scrutiny ensuring student books meet the school's PROUD layout standards and showcase high quality work
- Staff voice
- Pupil voice

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

This policy will be reviewed by the Director of Safeguarding and Head teachers bi-annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the BLP Trust Executive team.



Appendix 1: Parent form: Withdrawal from Sex Education Within RSE

To Be Completed by Parents/Carers

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



Appendix 2: By the End of Secondary School Pupils Should Know

Topic	Pupils Should Know
Families	• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships • How these relationships might contribute to wellbeing, and their importance for bringing up children • Why marriage or civil partnership is an important relationship choice for many couples. The legal status of marriage and civil partnership, including that they carry legal rights, benefits and protections that are not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have, for example, undergone a non-legally binding religious ceremony • That 'common-law marriage' is a myth, and cohabitants do not obtain marriage-like status or rights from living together or by having children • That forced marriage and marriage before the age of 18 are illegal • How families and relationships change over time, including through birth, death, separation and new relationships. • The roles and responsibilities of parents and carers with respect to raising children, including the characteristics of successful parenting and the importance of the early years of a child's life for brain development. • How to judge when a relationship is unsafe and where to seek help when needed, including when pupils are concerned about violence, harm, or when they are unsure who to trust
Respectful relationships, including friendships	• About the characteristics of positive relationships of all kinds, online and offline, including romantic relationships. For example, pupils should understand the role of consent, trust, mutual respect, honesty, kindness, loyalty, shared interests and outlooks, generosity, boundaries, tolerance, privacy, and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships • How to evaluate their impact on other people and treat others with kindness and respect, including in public spaces and including strangers. Pupils should understand the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, and that everyone is unique and equal • The importance of self-esteem, independence and having a positive relationship with oneself, and how these characteristics support healthy relationships with others. This includes developing one's own interests, hobbies, friendship groups, and skills. Pupils should understand what it means to be treated with respect by others • What tolerance requires, including the importance of tolerance of other people's beliefs • The practical steps pupils can take and skills they can develop to support respectful and kind relationships. This includes skills for communicating respectfully within relationships and with strangers, including in situations of conflict • The different types of bullying (including online bullying), the impact of bullying, the responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help • Skills for ending relationships or friendships with kindness and managing the difficult feelings that endings might bring, including disappointment, hurt or frustration • The role of consent, including in romantic and sexual relationships. Pupils should understand that ethical behaviour goes beyond consent and involves kindness, care and attention to the needs and vulnerabilities of the other person, as well as an awareness of power dynamics. Pupils should understand that just because



	someone says 'yes' to doing something that doesn't automatically make it ethically okay • How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, gender reassignment, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice). Pupils should be equipped to recognise misogyny and other forms of prejudice • How inequalities of power can impact behaviour within relationships, including sexual relationships. For example, how people who are disempowered can feel they are not entitled to be treated with respect by others or how those who enjoy an unequal amount of power might, with or without realising it, impose their preferences on others • How pornography can negatively influence sexual attitudes and behaviours, including by normalising harmful sexual behaviours and by disempowering some people, especially women, to feel a sense of autonomy over their own body and providing some people with a sense of sexual entitlement to the bodies of others • How some sub-cultures might influence our understanding of sexual ethics, including the sexual norms endorsed by so-called 'involuntary celibates' (incels) or online influencers
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 they provide to another has the potential to be shared and circulated online and the difficulty of removing potentially compromising material placed online. They should also understand the difference between public and private online spaces and related safety issues • Not to provide material to others that they would not want to be distributed further and not to pass on personal material which is sent to them. Pupils should understand that any material provided online might be circulated, and that once this has happened there is no way of controlling where it ends up. Pupils should understand the serious risks of sending material to others, including the law concerning the sharing of images • About the characteristics of social media, including that some social media accounts are fake, and/or may post things which aren't real or have been created with AI. They should also know that social media users may say things in more extreme ways than they might in face-to-face situations, and that some users present highly exaggerated or idealised profiles of themselves online • That keeping or forwarding indecent or sexual images of someone under 18 is a crime (even if the photo is of themselves or someone who has consented, and even if the photo was created by that child and/or using AI). That there are potentially serious consequences of acquiring or generating these images. That sharing indecent images of people over 18 without their consent is also a crime • How to seek support. They should also understand that they will not be in trouble for asking for help, either at school or with the police, if an image of themselves has been shared • What to do and how to report when they are concerned about material that has been circulated, including personal information, images or videos, and how to manage issues online • About the prevalence of deepfakes including videos and photos, how deepfakes can be used maliciously as well as for entertainment, the harms that can be caused by deepfakes and how to identify them



	• That the internet contains inappropriate and upsetting content, some of which is illegal, including unacceptable content that encourages misogyny, violence or use of weapons • Where to go for advice and support about something they have seen online. Pupils should understand that online content can present a distorted picture of the world and normalise or glamourise behaviours which are unhealthy and wrong • That social media can lead to escalations in conflicts, how to avoid these escalations and where to go for help and advice • How to identify when technology and social media is used as part of bullying, harassment, stalking, coercive and controlling behaviour, and other forms of abusive and/or illegal behaviour and how to seek support about concerns • That pornography, and other online content, often presents a distorted picture of people and their sexual behaviours and can negatively affect how people behave towards sexual partners. That this can affect people who see pornographic content accidentally, as well as those who see it deliberately. That pornography can also portray misogynistic behaviours and attitudes which can negatively influence those who see it • How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online • That websites may share personal data about their users, and information collected on their internet use, for commercial purposes (for example, to enable targeted advertising) • That criminals can operate online scams, such as using fake websites or emails to extort money or valuable personal information. This information can be used to the detriment of the person or wider society. About risks of sextortion, how to identify online scams relating to sex, and how to seek support if they have been scammed or involved in sextortion • That AI chatbots are an example of how AI is rapidly developing, and that these can pose risks by creating fake intimacy or offering harmful advice. That it is important to be able to critically think about new types of technology as they appear online and how they might pose a risk
<i>Being safe</i>	• How to recognise, respect and communicate consent and boundaries in relationships, including in early romantic relationships (in all contexts, including online) and early sexual relationships that might involve kissing or touching. That kindness and care for others requires more than just consent • That there are a range of strategies for identifying, resisting and understanding pressure in relationships from peers or others, including sexual pressure, and how to avoid putting pressure on others • How to determine whether other children, adults or sources of information are trustworthy, how to judge when a relationship is unsafe (and recognise this in the relationships of others); how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others if needed • How to increase their personal safety in public spaces, including when socialising with friends, family, the wider community or strangers. About ways of seeking help when needed and how to report harmful behaviour. That there are strategies they can use to increase their safety, and that this does not mean they will be blamed if they are victims of harmful behaviour. About the importance of trusting their instincts when something doesn't feel right, and they should understand that in some situations a person might appear trustworthy but have harmful intentions • What constitutes sexual harassment or sexual violence, and that such behaviour is unacceptable, emphasising that it is never the fault of the person experiencing it



	• That sexual harassment includes unsolicited sexual language, attention or touching, taking and/or sharing intimate or sexual images without consent, public sexual harassment, pressuring other people to do sexual things, and upskirting • About concepts and laws relating to: - o Sexual violence, including rape and sexual assault - o Harmful sexual behaviour, which includes all types of sexual harassment and sexual violence among young people but also includes other forms of concerning behaviour like using age-inappropriate sexual language - o Domestic abuse, including controlling or coercive behaviour, emotional, sexual, economic or physical abuse, and violent or threatening behaviour - o Harms which are exploitative, including sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and abuse, grooming, and financial exploitation - o Forced marriage - o Female genital mutilation (FGM), virginity testing and hymenoplasty • That fixated, obsessive, unwanted and repeated behaviours can be criminal, and where to get help if needed • That strangulation and suffocation are criminal offences, and that strangulation (applying pressure to the neck) is an offence, regardless of whether it causes injury • That any activity that involves applying force or pressure to someone's neck or covering someone's mouth and nose is dangerous and can lead to serious injury or death • That pornography presents some activities as normal which many people do not and will never engage in, some of which can be emotionally and/or physically harmful • How to seek support for their own worrying or abusive behaviour, or for worrying or abusive behaviour they have experienced from others, including information on where to report abuse and where to seek medical attention when required, for example after an assault
<i>Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health</i>	• That sex, for people who feel ready and are over the age of consent, can and should be enjoyable and positive • The law about the age of consent, that they have a choice about whether to have sex, that many young people wait until they are older, and that people of all ages can enjoy intimate and romantic relationships without sex • About sexual consent and their capacity to give, withhold or remove consent at any time, even if initially given, as well as the considerations that people might take into account prior to sexual activity, such as the law, their faith and family values. That kindness and care for others require more than just consent • 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 • That some sexual behaviours can be harmful • The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available, including male and female condoms, and signposting towards medically accurate online information about sexual and reproductive health to support contraceptive decision making • That there are choices in relation to pregnancy. Pupils should be given medically and legally accurate and 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) • About the use and availability of the HIV prevention drugs pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and post exposure prophylaxis (PEP), and how and where to access them. The importance of, and facts about, regular testing and the role of stigma • About the prevalence of STIs, the short and long-term impact they can have on those who contract them, and key facts about treatment • How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead people to take risks in their sexual behaviour • How and where to seek support for concerns around sexual relationships including sexual violence or harms • How to counter misinformation, including signposting towards medically accurate information and further advice, and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment
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Appendix 3: Government Parent/Carer Guidance

Understanding Relationships, Sex and Health Education at your child's secondary school: a guide for parents

We want all children to grow up healthy, happy, safe, and able to manage the challenges and opportunities of modern Britain. That is why, from September 2020, all secondary age children will be taught Relationships, Sex and Health Education.

These subjects are designed to equip your child with knowledge to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships as well as preparing them for a successful adult life. The world for all young people looks very different from the way it did 20 years ago when this curriculum was last updated – these changes bring the content into the 21st century, so that it is relevant for your child.

Your child's school will have flexibility to deliver the content in a way that is age and developmentally appropriate and sensitive to the needs and religious background of its pupils.

Relationships and Sex Education

Relationships and Sex Education will build on the teaching at primary. It aims to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds.

Your child's school will cover content on what healthy and unhealthy relationships look like and what makes a good friend, colleague and successful marriage or committed relationship. At the appropriate time, the focus will move to developing intimate relationships, to equip your child with knowledge they need to make safe, informed and healthy choices as they progress through adult life.

By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- families
- respectful relationships, including friendships
- online media
- being safe
- intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

You can find further details by searching '**relationships, sex and health education**' on GOV.UK.

Health Education

Health Education aims to give your child the information they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing, to recognise issues in themselves and others, and to seek support as early as possible when issues arise.



By the end of secondary school, pupils will have been taught content on:

- mental wellbeing
- internet safety and harms
- physical health and fitness
- healthy eating
- drugs, alcohol and tobacco
- health and prevention
- basic first aid
- changing adolescent body

You can find further details by searching '**relationships, sex and health education**' on GOV.UK.



The important lessons you teach your child about healthy relationships, looking after themselves and staying safe, are respected and valued under this new curriculum. Teaching at school will complement and reinforce the lessons you teach your child as they grow up.

Your child's school is required to consult with you when developing and renewing their policies on Relationships, Sex and Health Education. These policies must be published online and be available to anybody free of charge.

You can express your opinion, and this will help your child's school decide how and when to cover the content of the statutory guidance. It may also help them decide whether to teach additional non-statutory content. Schools are required to ensure their teaching reflects the age and religious background of their pupils.

Some schools will start to teach these subjects from September 2019 – if you'd like to know more, please speak to your child's school about what they plan to teach.



Right to withdraw your child

You cannot withdraw your child from Health Education or the Relationships Education element of Relationships and Sex Education, because it is important that all children receive this content, covering topics such as friendships and how to stay safe.

If you do not want your child to take part in some or all of the Sex Education lessons delivered at secondary, you can ask that they are withdrawn. Your child's head teacher will consider this request and discuss it with you, and will grant this in all but exceptional circumstances, up until three school terms before your child turns 16. At this age, your child can choose to receive Sex Education if they would like to, and the school should arrange for your child to receive this teaching in one of those three terms (unless there are exceptional circumstances).

If your child's school is planning to teach these subjects from September 2019, your right to withdraw your child from Sex Education will be governed by the current legislation and so is absolute for the 2019/20 academic year – your child cannot opt in, and the head teacher will not overrule this request. This will remain the case until September 2020, when the new subjects will become compulsory and the new right to withdraw provisions will apply.

The science curriculum in all maintained schools also includes content on human development, including reproduction, which there is no right to withdraw from.



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for Education

If you want to know more about what will be taught as part of these new subjects, the best thing to do is speak to your child's school.