



## Ribston Hall High School

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Date of Policy: January 2025

Person Responsible: Lead Teacher for PSHE

Date of next review: January 2026

#### Introduction

The School acknowledges its duty to help young people to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life. This is by providing them with the knowledge and understanding that will enable them to make well informed and responsible decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy and resilience.

The School also understands its responsibility to support young people to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges, and complex contexts; to know how and when to ask for help, and to know where to access support.

#### Statutory Requirements

As a secondary academy school we must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the [Children and Social work act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, 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](#).

#### Definition

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.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## **Aims**

Effective RSE supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy relationships, at the appropriate time. Students should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs.

Students are encouraged to value their physical, sexual, mental and emotional health, and make responsible and informed decisions on their health, morality and role in society. The Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) curriculum is well planned, coherent and relevant. The curriculum is part of the PSHE curriculum, which is delivered through a combination of weekly taught lessons and drop-down days throughout the academic year.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) should provide young people with the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should cover healthy relationships, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, safer sex and contraception, how to manage situations, and the positive and negative impact relationships can have on mental health and self-respect.

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

Students are encouraged to develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide discussions, opinions, behaviour, relationships and shape their future roles, responsibilities, and relationships.

In addition, Health Education provides young people with the information that they need to make good decisions about their own physical health and mental wellbeing and, when issues arise, know how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources. It promotes strategies to help students to become confident in their ability to achieve well, to persevere and respond calmly and rationally to setbacks. Effective teaching should reduce stigma attached to health issues and show young people that physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked.

Puberty, including menstruation, is covered in Health Education and ensures that students are prepared for changes they and their peers will experience.

## **Confidentiality**

PSHE and Enrichment lessons aim to offer students an open forum to discuss potentially sensitive issues. However, the School is aware that such discussions can lead to disclosures which may indicate that a child or children are at risk of harm. All students are made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a disclosure to a member of staff

('staff' will be taken to include teachers, support staff, and any other adult who is supporting the school in delivery of its curriculum and the care of students) and how any disclosure will be handled including if they have a concern about a friend or peer.

Staff will make it clear to students that some information cannot be kept confidential, and that if certain disclosures are made, we may have to involve outside agencies. This will be particularly relevant in cases where the member of staff may judge that the student is at risk. Students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support in the event of such disclosures.

Whilst it is the school's policy to usually inform and involve parents/carers, there is no legal responsibility for teachers to do so if this is against the express wishes of the student concerned.

## **Policy Development**

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

- Review – the PSHE Lead Teacher reviewed the current provision and created curriculum maps of updated schemes of learning, purchasing additional packages and teaching materials to support.
- Parent/stakeholder consultation – A parent survey was completed in January 2024 and a Student Survey was completed in September 2024.

Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.

The delivery of Relationships and Sex Education is not the sole responsibility of schools. Parents and the wider community have much to offer. Parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. The RSE curriculum imparts coherent, relevant and detailed information to support students' learning outside school and revisits content regularly and age-appropriately.

The PSHE Curriculum and wider extra-curricular offer are informed by student voice through the following: the Online Pupil Survey (GHLL); the School Council and student, staff and parental questionnaires. It is also informed by, and compliant with, the statutory government guidance.

All staff have a responsibility towards promoting and supporting all students' PSHE learning and progress. This includes staff who teach PSHE, form tutors, the pastoral team, and those subjects that have common threads with the PSHE Curriculum (Computing, Physical Education, Biology, Religious Studies, Food Technology, Sixth Form Enrichment Programme).

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **The Governing Board**

The governing board 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/non-science components of RSE (see Parents' right to withdraw)

### **Staff**

The PSHE Lead is responsible for devising the PSHE Curriculum so that it is compliant with statutory government guidance and offers varied opportunities for pupils to develop on their PSHE learning and benefit from the content. The PSHE Curriculum is taught by staff of varied specialisms, promoting the holistic nature of the delivery of PSHE. Drop down days are delivered by form tutors, in addition to visitors to school reflecting the need for a variety of delivery to ensure maximum coverage.

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science components of RSE

Not all teaching staff are required to teach RSE. However, if required, staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSE unless they have reasonable grounds to do so. These will be considered by the headteacher. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

### **Students**

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

### **Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their continuing professional development and lesson planning.

The PSHE lead 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.

## **The Curriculum**

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

This includes teaching about: Families; Respectful Relationships, including Friendships; Online and Media; Being Safe (The Law); Intimate and Sexual Relationships, including Sexual Health, Mental Wellbeing; Internet Safety and Harms; Healthy Eating; Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco; Health and Prevention; Basic First Aid; Changing Adolescent Body. Biological human reproduction and development, STIs and other topics also continue to form part of National Curriculum Science. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). The curriculum map for RSE can be found on the school's website.

The School recognises that it has a duty to promote the welfare and safety of children through PSHE. Pupils will be educated about Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage, FGM, Homophobic, Transphobic and Biphobic bullying, Domestic Abuse, Online Grooming, Child Sexual Exploitation, and given the opportunity to develop the skills they need to stay safe from all forms of abuse, knowing where to report concerns and where to receive support.

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).

RSE is covered during timetabled lessons for Years 7-13, covering topics which are age-appropriate and planned in accordance with 'The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019' and GHLL guidance. The content is accessible to all pupils, with amendments made to lessons to support SEND pupils.

### **Parents' Right to Withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the School can make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

If parents would like their child to be withdrawn from some or all of their child's sex education, then parents should request a preliminary discussion with the respective Head of Year to ensure that the parents and child's wishes are understood.

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 pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the PSHE Lead through:

- Learning Walks
- Pupil Voice surveys, individual surveys, the School Council, and the Online Pupil survey conducted by Gloucestershire Healthy Living and Learning (GHLL).

The consistency and quality of PSHE is quality assured by the Assistant Headteacher i/c Teaching and Learning, who analyses provision maps and the curriculum offer. Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Governing board.

## Appendix 1: 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	          