



St Bede's

Catholic School
& Sixth Form College

RELATIONSHIP, SEX AND HEALTH EDUCATION (RSHE) POLICY

Academic Year

2022 - 2023

Governing Body Approval	
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What Is Relationship, Sex and Health Education?

Relationships, sex and health education (RSHE) is an important part of PSHE education. Relationship education is compulsory for all primary school pupils, and relationships and sex education (RSE) is compulsory for all secondary school pupils. When any school provides RSHE they must have regard to the Secretary of State's guidance, this is a statutory duty.

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

RSHE gives young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. RSHE gives children and young people the essential skills to build positive, enjoyable and non-exploitative relationships.

The education of physical health and wellbeing builds on the primary content to enable students to understand their changing bodies, including menstrual wellbeing and their feelings to further the language they use to talk about their bodies, health, and emotional norms. In addition to understanding variations in emotions and physical complaints and where health, wellbeing issues and concerns begin. Health education enables making the connections between physical and emotional changes for all students (regardless of gender and identity), the impact on physical health and wellbeing, their capacity to learn and maintain their mental health and wellbeing.

RSHE 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).

Our comprehensive programme of RSHE and PSHE aims to provide accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex and sexual health as well as an understanding of sexual violence and harassment. It also gives children and young people essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

When relevant, there may be a need to tailor content and teaching to meet specific needs of pupils at different developmental stages, ensuring teaching is sensitive, age appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.

Why Is Relationship and Sex Education Needed in Schools?

Taken from the Secretary of State's Foreword, September 2021

Today's 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.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools. The key decisions on these subjects have been informed by a thorough engagement process, including a public call for evidence that received over 23,000 responses from parents, young people, schools and experts and a public consultation where over 40,000 people contacted the Department for Education.

The depth and breadth of views is clear, and there are understandable and legitimate areas of contention. Our guiding principles have been that all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of pupils and parents while always with the aim of providing pupils with the knowledge they need of the law.

We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters. Schools complement and reinforce this role and have told us that they see building on what pupils learn at home as an important part of delivering a good education.

In primary schools, we want the subjects to put in place the key building blocks of healthy, respectful relationships, focusing on family and friendships, in all contexts, including online. This will sit alongside the essential understanding of how to be healthy. At secondary, teaching will build on the knowledge acquired at primary and develop further pupils' understanding of health, with an increased focus on risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex.

Teaching about mental wellbeing is central to these subjects, especially as a priority for parents is their children's happiness. We know that children and young people are increasingly experiencing challenges, and that young people are at particular risk of feeling lonely. The new subject content will give them the knowledge and capability to take care of themselves and receive support if problems arise.

All of this content should support the wider work of schools in helping to foster pupil wellbeing and develop resilience and character that we know are fundamental to pupils being happy, successful and productive members of society. Central to this is pupils' ability to believe that they can achieve goals, both academic and personal; to stick to tasks that will help them achieve those goals, even when the reward may be distant or uncertain; and to recover from knocks and challenging periods in their lives.

This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity, and honesty. We have endeavoured to ensure the content is proportionate and deliverable. Whilst we are not mandating content on financial education or careers, we want to support the high-quality teaching of these areas in all schools as part of a comprehensive programme, which complements the national curriculum where appropriate and meets the ambitions of the Careers Strategy.

We know that many schools will choose to teach the compulsory content within a wider programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education or similar. Schools are encouraged to continue to do so, if this is right for them, and build on established, high quality programmes.

These subjects represent a huge opportunity to help our children and young people develop. The knowledge and attributes gained will support their own, and others', wellbeing and attainment and help young people to become successful and happy adults who make a meaningful contribution to society.

Principles and Values

St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College believes that RSHE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continuing into adult life.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Encourage every student to contribute to make our community a safe environment and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn.
- Be set within this wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness.
- Encourage students and teachers to share and respect each other's views. To celebrate diversity while upholding the important values are love, respect and compassion for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment with the intention to educate and develop understanding.
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up. We aim to work in partnership with parents and students.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals and relevant school partners.

RSHE in St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College has three main elements:

Attitudes and Values

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

Personal and Social Skills

- learning to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively
- developing self-respect and empathy for others
- learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice
- developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made
- managing conflict resolution
- empower students with the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)
- how to report concerns of abuse including peer on peer abuse and sexual harassment, and the vocabulary and confidence to do so
- explore societal norms and the use/misuse of alcohol and drugs and the impact on relationships
- learning to actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn. (In all contexts, including online)

Knowledge and Understanding

- learning and understanding physical, emotional and spiritual development at appropriate stages
- learn and understand relationships are meant to be positive, healthy and pleasurable
- understanding human sexuality, identity, human reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- learning about contraception, Sexually Transmitted Infections and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- learning the reasons for delaying sexual activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- the avoidance of an unintended pregnancy
- The impact of viewing harmful content through online and media
- 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
- All students, those born male or born female including those who are non-binary should know the key facts about puberty, the changes in the adolescent body (including physical and emotional) and menstrual wellbeing (Health Education)
- Learn where to go for help and advice and how to access local and national services

Aims

The aim of RSHE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of sexual health. Our RSHE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour; have the confidence and self-esteem to value

themselves and others and respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationship they want.

- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within sexual and pastoral relationships.
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into unwanted or unprotected sex.
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for relationship and sex issues.
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality; challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- understand the arguments for delaying sexual activity.
- understand the reasons for having protected sex.
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves and, where they have one, their partner from uninvited/unwanted conceptions and sexually transmitted infections.
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to sexual relationships.
- know and have an understanding of the dangers and the law regarding sexting.
- to have a full appreciation and understanding of the risks associated with sexual exploitation and sexual harassment.
- To fully understand the term consent.

Organisation and Content of Relationship and Sex Education

St Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College specifically delivers Relationship and Sex Education through its PSHE Programme, RE and Science lessons.

Much of the Relationship and Sex Education at St Bede's takes place within PSHE lessons. Tutors generally deliver the PSHE Curriculum with support from professionals where appropriate. Form tutors work closely with their tutees and we believe that they are the best people to work with the students on many of the topics. RSHE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although some of the physical aspects are also included. The Science National Curriculum is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction, although the importance of relationships is not forgotten.

RSHE will be representative and inclusive of LGBT young people. The RE department supports the emotional aspect of RSHE and focuses on the Catholic teaching and beliefs concerning Relationship Sex and Health Education.

Aspects of the RSHE are taught to each year group and are planned and delivered in a manner that will consider the age appropriateness of the content. More expert or specialist teachers and other professionals may support staff with teaching certain aspects of the curriculum. Support and professional development will be provided for staff, so that they can develop the confidence and skills in delivering the RSHE programme.

The RSHE curriculum predominantly uses materials from the 'Live Life to the Full' programme created by TEN:TEN, a company that has developed enriching, innovative and inspiring Christian faith-based resources for both primary and secondary schools. This will complement the teaching of relationships education, health and living in the wider world themes of the PSHE curriculum.

Any RSHE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons group agreements are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the group agreement established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time.

Support is offered with the year team or from the PSHE Co-ordinator who will help with planning or delivery lessons if required.

Assessment is an ongoing process and involves teacher, pupil and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills, and attitudes

Sexual violence and harassment

All staff, pupils and parents should be aware of the importance of:

- Making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment is not acceptable and will never be tolerated
- Not tolerating or dismissing sexual violence or sexual harassment as "banter", "part of growing up", "a joke" or "boys being boys"
- Challenging behaviour (potentially criminal in nature), such as inappropriate contact, flicking bras and lifting up skirts. Dismissing or tolerating such behaviours risks normalising them
- Understanding that all of the above can be driven by wider societal factors beyond the school, such as everyday sexist stereotypes and everyday sexist language
- Encouraging the reporting of any abusive behaviour to someone trusted. Students are encouraged to report to a parent, carer, or a member of school staff. If abusive behaviour is online, then follow the appropriate reporting systems on the platform in question and speak to a trusted person.

Inclusion

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Students with Special Needs

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

Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of gender orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them.

Pupils right to be excused from sex education

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some parts of sex education, delivered as part of statutory RSHE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. It is good practice for the school to discuss the request with the parent/carer and, as appropriate, with the child to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, the benefits of receiving the important information, and possible detrimental effects that the withdrawal might have. The head teacher/RSHE lead will document the process and outcome.

In exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parent's request, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point the student can choose to attend RSHE. Parents are welcome to review any RSHE resources the school uses. If parents were to decide to withdraw their child from any part of the curriculum, alternative arrangements would be put in place in such cases. Parents are encouraged to discuss their decisions with staff at the earliest opportunity. Parents are welcome to review any RSHE resources the school uses.

Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

Teachers and all adults in school cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents or Headteacher of any disclosure unless the Headteacher has specifically requested them to do so. In a case where a teacher learns from a student under the age of 16 years old that they are having or contemplating sexual activity:

- the young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice from appropriate agencies.
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the school's procedures.
- Any young person deemed as vulnerable or at risk will have the details of the case passed to the safeguard team who will follow safeguard protocols.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

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

Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationship and Sex Education

Assessment is carried out, where appropriate, at the start to gather the baseline knowledge and end of every module and involves teacher, student and peer assessment of knowledge and understanding, interpersonal skills, and attitudes. The school will monitor progress and impact through the delivery of RSHE. It is the responsibility of the PSHE Co-ordinator to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE, in the context of the overall school plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. The PSHE programme will be treated as a subject department in this exercise, under which all departments undertake regular self-evaluation and monitoring and evaluation exercises led by the School's Leadership and Management Team.

The Governors Curriculum Staffing and Resources Committee is responsible for overseeing, reviewing and organising the revision of the Relationship and Sex Education Policy.