BELLE VUE GIRLS' ACADEMY

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Reviewed by	Approved by	Date of Approval	Next Review Date
EHA/JKE	LGB	February 2025	February 2026

Contents

1. Definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)

The academy adopts the Department for Education's definition of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE):

'… 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 or other type of committed relationship.'

(Department for Education Statutory Guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, 2019)

2. Aims

The aims of relationships and sex education (RSE) at our academy are to:

- Enable pupils to learn about what makes healthy relationships, including with family, friends and on-line, how to recognise unhealthy behaviour in relationships and how to seek help if they feel unsafe.
- Support pupils to develop self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- 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.
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies.

Teaching will be sensitive, age appropriate and will respect the diversity of families and faiths in our community.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity:

'Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation.'

(Department for Education Statutory Guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education, 2019)

3. Policy development

This policy is based on the Department for Education's Statutory Guidance on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education 2019 and The Equality Act 2010 including the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The academy's RSE policies have been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents as required by the Department for Education. Policies have been written in consultation with guidance from the Council for Mosques, Bradford SACRE and Bradford Equity Partnership, in order to support delivery of relationships and sex education which is sensitive, age-appropriate and respectful of faiths and diversity. We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the evolution of our school's relationships and sex education programme. Formal consultations with parents have taken place in 2020 and 2023 and are scheduled for 2025. The ~~consultation and~~ policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review - a working group pulled together all relevant information including national guidance
2. Staff consultation - all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation - parents and interested parties were invited to work with us on the development of the policy. This took the form of consultation meetings and an invitation for all parents to submit written feedback on the policy and curriculum plan.
4. Ratification - once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.
5. Review – the policy is reviewed, and if deemed necessary adapted, annually by key staff and governors and shared on the school website.

4. Statutory requirements

From September 2020, all secondary pupils are required to be taught relationships and sex education. This applies to every school whether it is maintained, academy, free school or independent.

5. Links to other policies and curriculum areas

The Science curriculum includes teaching about puberty, reproduction and inheritance, intercourse and the menstrual cycle, sexually transmitted infections, birth control, contraception and fertility treatment.

The Religious Studies curriculum covers identity including respect for others with different beliefs, stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination, and friendships.

The Food and Physical Education subject curricula cover key elements of health education including diet, the impact of unhealthy diet upon lifestyle, physical exercise and fitness.

The Information Technology curriculum covers e-safety. This includes how to use technology responsibly, respectfully and securely, how to keep personal information private, and where to go for help and support.

There continues to be no right of withdrawal from any part of the school curriculum except for Religious Studies and the sex education element of RSE.

The delivery of RSE is supported by our anti-bullying and safeguarding policies.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE will be inclusive for all pupils, sensitive to all family and faith backgrounds and pupils' own identities. It will be respectful of all Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. The Protected Characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership and pregnancy and maternity. The school environment reflects, values and celebrates the diversity of our community.

Across all key stages, pupils will develop the following skills and attributes:

- Communication skills
- Forming positive relationships including self-respect as well as respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness and managing conflict and difficult emotions.

Skills and knowledge will be taught in a sensitive and age-appropriate way. Teaching methods are a combination of sharing information, facilitating discussions and exploring issues and values. Lessons will be delivered by teaching and support staff within school, and external professionals where appropriate.

The Department for Education has set out guidance on what children should learn by the end of secondary school, under a series of themes which are set out below. Some themes will recur throughout key stages 3 and 4 as part of a spiral curriculum, others will be delivered in the most appropriate year only. Parents have the right to withdraw their children from lessons on sexual intimacy, sexualised behaviour and sexual health, as detailed in section 7.

A summary of the academy's delivery of the RSE themes below, by year group and by subject area, can be found on our website in the Relationships and Sex Education section. This is supplemented by the academy's delivery of themes related to Physical Health and Wellbeing, details of which can also be found on the overview of RSHE programme on our website.

Families

- There are different types of committed, stable relationships
- How these relationships contribute to happiness and their importance for bringing up children
- What marriage is, including its legal status compared to other types of long-term relationships
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be entered into freely
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising 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, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others.

Respectful relationships

- Characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending (non-sexual) relationships
- Practical steps for a range of 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)
- In school and in wider society young people 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

- Different types of bullying (including cyber bullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- 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
- 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

- Rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts including online
- 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
- What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- 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
- 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 and effects of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent, and how it may be withdrawn, in any context.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- How to recognise the characteristics of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships
- All aspects of health can be affected by choices related to sex and relationships, positively or negatively
- Facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility
- Strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- Young people have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- Facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- Facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- Choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options)
- Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about prevention and treatment

- How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- Sources of advice, including how to access confidential sexual health advice and treatment.

7. Inclusion

The delivery of RSE content is made accessible to all pupils. We are committed to ensuring that our RSE resources are accessible and inclusive for all students, including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We tailor our RSE curriculum to meet diverse learning needs by providing differentiated materials and approaches as well as offering additional support where necessary with an awareness that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Our staff deliver RSE content in a way that is respectful and inclusive of all abilities. We also ensure that our approach aligns with the individual needs of each student, fostering an environment where every child feels valued and supported in their learning journey. The academy delivers an inclusive RSE curriculum that respects and reflects the diversity of the student body in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and the Protected Characteristics.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The Governing Board

The Governing Board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the head teacher to account for its implementation.

8.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that RSE is taught consistently across the school, and for having a strategic overview of requests to withdraw pupils from sex education components of RSE, which is managed by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSE. (see section 7). The head teacher is also responsible for ensuring that any young person who was previously withdrawn from sex education but wishes to receive it during the 3 terms before they turn 16 is provided with sex education.

8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way, taking account of pupils' cultural and faith backgrounds
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE, as with any other subject
- Monitoring children's learning in order to ensure they make progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the sex education 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 these concerns with the Headteacher or the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSE.

8.4 Pupils

Pupils are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity, as they would be expected to in any other lesson.

9.   Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the sex education components of RSE. That means the lessons that cover physical aspects of sexual development and intimate relationships, and sexual health. Requests for withdrawal should be directed in the first instance to the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for the delivery of RSE (jonathan.kennedy@bvga.bdat-academies.org). The Assistant Headteacher, in close liaison with the Headteacher and other relevant senior leaders, will discuss any such request with parents and take appropriate action.

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the academy will respect the parents' request to withdraw the child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the academy will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. This process is the same for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). However there may be exceptional circumstances where senior leaders may want to take a pupil's specific needs arising from their SEND into account when making this decision. Records of withdrawals are managed by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSE. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. Training

Staff receive training on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction to the the role of the form tutor and the Personal Development programme. Staff receive ongoing support as required regarding the delivery of RSE themes from the Personal Development team including Assistant Heads of Year/ Heads of Year and the Subject Leader for Personal Development. Additional support for the delivery of RSE comes from external providers such as Step 2. The Headteacher may also invite visitors from outside the school, such as school nurses or sexual health professionals, to provide support and training to staff teaching RSE.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for this area through the academy's quality assurance processes for Personal Development. This includes observation of RSE sessions delivered by academy staff as well as external providers and visitors. Materials and resources used by academy staff, external providers and visitors are quality assured with a focus upon ensuring they are sensitive and age-appropriate. Additionally, for external providers and visitors, materials and resources are quality assured to make sure that they are in line with the academy's RSE policy and statutory requirements. Outcomes of RSE delivery are evaluated on an on-going basis and in line with school improvement planning, to ensure compliance with statutory requirements and to assess the effectiveness of the programme.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSE. At every review, the policy will be submitted to the Local Governing Body for approval.

12. Parental requests for RSE resources

Parents/ carers are welcome to request the RSE resources used by the academy. The academy can share worksheets, presentations, or other content used in RSE sessions with parents/ carers when asked to do so. Parents/ carers should contact the Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for RSE (jonathan.kennedy@bvga.bdat-academies.org) if they require such resources.