Relationships and Sex Education Policy Document

Review Date	Version number	Reviewer/Owner (post holder)	Approved by (Committee)
Sept 2024	1	Chrissie Jackson (PSHE Lead)	24/9/2024
Sept 2026	1	Nicola Kerr (PSHE Lead) James Maddern (AP for Personal Development)	No material changes – Ratified 17/11/2026

Material changes since last publication

Section	**Changes**

Introduction

This policy has been written in accordance with the statutory guidance document "Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education" (DfE, 2019) as well as the *Sex and Relationship Education Guidance DfES 2000* and the following legislation: *Equality Act (2010), Supplementary Guidance SRE for the 21st century (2014), Keeping Children Safe in Education – Statutory safeguarding guidance (2024).*

The purpose of a whole-school Relationship and Sex Education policy is to: explain the definition, aims and objectives of RSE, within Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE).

What Is Relationship and Sex Education?

RSE 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. Additionally, it involves acquiring information about the physical aspects of growing up, having relationships, engaging in sex, and learning about human sexuality and sexual health.
RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

Aims

The aim of RSE 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 RSE programme aims to prepare pupils for an adult life in which they can:

- Teaching the characteristics of positive, healthy and respectful relationships – including learning about how to effectively communicate consent, how to recognise consent from others and a person's right to withdraw consent.
- 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.
- Teaching about healthy, respectful, non-exploitative and non-coercive behaviours.
- Communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for sex and relationship 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 including HIV.
- 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.
- Understand the dangers around online safety and media use

As a minimum, the school will meet statutory guidance of topics covered in the following guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Relationship and Sex Education within PSHE in the school 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, marriage and civil partnerships;
- Identifying the impact of healthy / unhealthy relationships;
- 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;
- Developing a positive self-image and how to take pride in yourself;
- Learning to make choices with an absence of prejudice;
- Developing an appreciation of the consequences of choices made;
- Managing conflict;
- Developing the skills to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances (both as exploited or exploiter)

Knowledge and Understanding

- Learning and understanding physical development at appropriate stages;
- Understanding social wellbeing and relationships;
- Understanding human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships;
- Learning about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services;
- Learning about the legal position with regard to sexual activity, the reasons for delaying such activity, and the benefits to be gained from such delay;
- The avoidance of unplanned pregnancy;
- KS5 - Learning about sexual health advice available post 18 for example, university advice / support and NHS Choices;

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, LGBTQIA+ 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).

As a minimum, the school will meet statutory guidance of topics covered in the following guidance: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Right of Withdrawal of Pupils from Relationship and Sex Education

In accordance with the legislation there is no 'right to withdraw' from Relationships Education at primary or secondary level. As a school, we believe the contents of this element of the RSE curriculum – such as family, friendship and safety (including online safety) are important for all children to be taught.

Parents, under the legislation will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools, which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.

The school is happy to discuss parents' concerns about any part of the programme and to provide support material where necessary, however if a parent still wishes to withdraw their child from the sex education content of RSE they will need to meet with the Principal to discuss their concerns and then confirm their decision in writing.

Statement of the school's commitment to equal opportunities and inclusion, with reference to the Inclusion and Equal Opportunities Policies

The school considers the needs of different groups within the school. Schools have a duty under the Equality Act to ensure that teaching is accessible to all children and young people, including those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT). Inclusive RSE will foster good relations between pupils, tackle all types of prejudice – including homophobia – and promote understanding and respect. The Department for Education have produced advice on *The Equality Act 2010* and schools (DfE 2014b).

Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

All teachers receive regular safeguarding training and are aware that they cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. School staff should not ask leading questions. Any disclosure should be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Students must be told that their disclosure is going to be passed on and to whom.

The school teaches PSHE and RSE through:

- A termly, scheduled, collapsed timetable of five lessons per term. Delivered by tutors in tutor groups through the PSHE programme of study. School specific information on topics covered can be found on the school website.
- A wide range of teaching methods are used to enable pupils to actively participate in their own learning, Including, but not limited to; quizzes, case studies, research, role play, video and small group discussion
- A differentiated curriculum where necessary, depending on the individual or groups of pupils being taught.
- Different curriculum areas e.g. biological aspects are delivered through the Science curriculum and other curriculum areas.

Working with outside agencies

- The school may use the expertise of outside agencies.
- Appropriate and suitably experienced and or knowledgeable visitors from outside of the school may be invited to contribute to the delivery of RSE.
- All content will be Quality Assured by the school through SLT/PSHE Lead and supporting staff.

Content

The PSHE Association's Programme of Study document covers the key concepts, skills and topics at different key stages which should be covered as part of a comprehensive programme.
https://pshe-association.org.uk/guidance/ks1-5/planning/long-term-planning
The school's Schemes of Work provide further detail of the content delivered to the children and young people. These are available electronically on the staff area.

Assessment

Teaching and learning of PSHE and RSE will be assessed by:

- Peer Assessment
- Teacher Assessment
- Student self-assessment

Procedures for monitoring and evaluation

The Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Assistant Principal for Personal Development and PSHE Lead are accountable to the LGC in ensuring that the Policy operates in practice. The PSHE Lead monitors the PSHE programme at regular intervals using this feedback to evaluate and adjust the programme where necessary.

The PSHE and RSE programme is monitored by:

- Pupil feedback (student voice)
- Lesson planning and observations
- Teacher monitoring

Partnership with parents/carers

The school is well aware that the primary role in children's sex education lies with parents and carers. We therefore wish to build a positive and supporting relationship with the parents of children within our Academies, through mutual understanding, trust and cooperation. To promote this objective, we:

- Inform parents about the school's Relationships and Sex Education Policy.
- Answer any questions that parents may have about the sex education of their child.
- Take seriously any issue that parents raise with teachers or governors about this Policy, or about the arrangements for sex education in the school.
- Encourage parents to be involved in reviewing the Policy, and making modifications to it as necessary.
- Inform parents about the best practice known with regard to sex education, so that the teaching in 'school' supports the key messages that parents and 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 bodies and their increasing responsibilities.

In order to help bridge the link between school and home, The school may periodically disseminate RSE information/education for parents/carers via the school newsletter, e-comms or letter. Parents' views are welcome at any time - the PSHE Lead can be contacted via email: admin@abbeyparkschool.org.uk.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints about content and/or delivery of the RSE programme will be addressed according to the Academy Trust's Complaints Procedure.