

# Beckfoot Thornton

## Relationship and Sex Education Policy

Last reviewed on:		January 2025	
Next review due:		January 2025	
Version	Date	Description	Revision Author
4.0	January 2025		SET

## Contents

1. Definition.....	2
2. Aims.....	2
3. Delivery of Relationship and Sex Education .....	3
4. Relationship and Sex Education content .....	5
5. Relationship and Sex Education for vulnerable pupils .....	6
6. Roles and responsibilities.....	6
7. Parents' right to withdraw .....	7
8. Confidentiality and Safeguarding .....	7
9. Policy Development .....	8
Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE .....	9

### 1. Definition

At Beckfoot Thornton, it is our priority to ensure that all students access a curriculum that inspires all learners to be confident communicators, knowledgeable and expert learners, committed community contributors and future-ready young people. Relationship and sex education (RSE) forms a key part of their curriculum experience and Personal Development education. Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know 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, both physically and mentally, including risk areas such as drugs and alcohol, as well as introducing knowledge about intimate relationships and sex. 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 meaningful contributions to society.

### 2. Aims

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. The aims of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) at Beckfoot Thornton is to:

- Be a partnership between home and school.
- Provide a safe and supportive framework in which sensitive discussions can take place.
- Give pupils an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.
- Teach pupils the correct terminology / language used in RSE e.g. the correct medical vocabulary for parts of the body.
- Teach pupils about what makes healthy relationships, including with family, friends and online, how to recognise unhealthy behaviours in relationships and how to seek help if they feel unsafe
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.

- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality, diversity and relationships.
- Prepare pupils for puberty and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene.

Teaching will be age appropriate and will respect the diversity of families and faith in our community

### **3. Delivery of Relationship and Sex Education**

RSE is an integral part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum. It is delivered as part of our age-appropriate tutorial and assembly programme, whilst biological aspects are taught within the science curriculum. Pupils may also receive stand-alone Relationship and sex education sessions delivered by trained health professionals through timetabled sessions. From September 2020, all secondary pupils must be taught relationships and sex education. This applies to every school whether it is maintained, academy, free school or independent.

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with developing the following skills, within the context of family life:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions.
- Recognizing and assessing potential risks.
- Assertiveness.
- Seeking help and support when required.
- Informed decision-making.
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others.
- Recognizing and maximizing a healthy lifestyle.
- Managing conflict.

At Beckfoot Thornton, pupils build on the skills, attitudes, values, knowledge and understanding they have acquired and developed during the primary phase. Our PSHE education acknowledges and addresses the changes that young people are experiencing, beginning with transition to secondary school, the challenges of adolescence and their increasing independence. It teaches the skills which will prepare them for the opportunities and challenges of life. Pupils are encouraged to manage relationships and the increasing influence of peers and the media. Our PSHE curriculum is designed to instil a sense of confidence so that they can make a full and active contribution to society.

#### **Core Themes:**

##### **1. Health and Wellbeing**

- How to manage transition
- How to maintain physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing.
- How to make informed choices about health and wellbeing matters including drugs,

alcohol and tobacco; maintaining a balanced diet; physical activity; mental and emotional health and wellbeing; and sexual health.

- How to reflect on parenthood and the consequences of teenage pregnancy.
- How to assess and manage risks to health; and to keep themselves and others safe.
- How to identify and access help, advice and support.
- How to respond in an emergency, including administering first aid.
- How to develop an informed opinion on the role and influence of the media on lifestyle.

## **2. Relationships**

- How to develop and maintain a variety of healthy relationships within a range of social/cultural contexts and to develop parenting skills.
- How to recognize and manage emotions within a range of relationships.
- How to deal with risky or negative relationships including abuse, neglect and exploitation. In addition, all forms of bullying (including the distinct challenges posed by online bullying) harassment and abuse, sexual and other violence and online encounters.
- How to understand the concept of consent in a variety of contexts (including in sexual relationships).
- How to manage loss including bereavement, separation and divorce.
- How to respect equality and be a productive member of a diverse community.
- How to identify and access appropriate advice and support.
- That 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
- Facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available
- Practical steps for a range of contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on some but not inclusive to sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice).
- Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it should be entered into freely
- The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships
- 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.
- Some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including things such as violent behaviour, harassment and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- 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
- 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

### **3. Online harassment**

- 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.

### **4. Living in the Wider World**

- The rights and responsibilities as members of diverse communities, as active citizens, and participants in the local and national economy.
- How to make informed choices and be enterprising and ambitious.
- How to develop employability, team working and leadership skills and develop flexibility and resilience.
- The economic and business environment.
- How personal financial choices can affect oneself and others and about rights and responsibilities as consumers.
- 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.

### **5. 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

## **4. Relationship and Sex Education content**

RSE will be delivered in a safe, supportive learning environment and will be age appropriate.

Students will be given the opportunity to ask questions to help them prepare for relationships and to

understand how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Science - Statutory Programme of Study	RSE Programme of Study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fertilisation in humans is the fusion of a male and female cell.</li> <li>• The physical and emotional changes that take place during adolescence.</li> <li>• The human reproductive system, the menstrual cycle and fertilisation.</li> <li>• How the foetus develops in the uterus.</li> <li>• How the growth and reproduction of bacteria and the replication of viruses can affect health.</li> <li>• How fertilisation can be prevented by contraception and how some methods of contraception protect us from disease.</li> <li>• The way in which hormonal control occurs, including the effects of sex hormones.</li> <li>• Some medical uses of hormones, including the control and promotion of fertility.</li> <li>• The defence mechanisms of the body.</li> <li>• How sex is determined in humans.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friendship.</li> <li>• Personal hygiene.</li> <li>• Puberty.</li> <li>• Negotiating with adults.</li> <li>• Sex education and the law.</li> <li>• Effects of changes caused by divorce, separation, bereavement and new family members.</li> <li>• Peer pressure.</li> <li>• The consequences of high-risk behaviour in relation to sexual activity.</li> <li>• Contraception.</li> <li>• Different cultural norms regarding sex and relationships. (including the Equality Act 2010)</li> <li>• Cyber safety and grooming.</li> <li>• Body image.</li> <li>• The impact of drug use on relationships.</li> <li>• The dangers of date rape drugs.</li> <li>• How having a baby changes a relationship.</li> <li>• The reality of young parenting.</li> <li>• The financial cost of parenting.</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted infections (STIs).</li> <li>• HIV / AIDS – the global dimension.</li> <li>• Contraception – making the right choices.</li> <li>• Exploitation in relationships.</li> <li>• The dangers of pornography.</li> </ul>

## **5. Relationship and Sex Education for vulnerable pupils**

We are aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to the nature of their SEND. Relationships and Sex Education can also be a particular priority for some pupils, for example those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs or learning disabilities.

RSE content and teaching will be personalised for SEND pupils where appropriate in Beckfoot Thornton mainstream and for pupils in the Resource Provision (known in school as the DSP) to meet the specific needs of children at different developmental stages.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

### **6.1 The Trust Board**

The Beckfoot Trust Board is responsible for ensuring that all schools have an agreed policy in place and holds the head teacher to account for its implementation

### **6.2 The Local School Committee**

The Local School Committee will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

### **6.3 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-science components of RSE (see Section 7). The headteacher is also responsible for ensuring that appropriately trained staff deliver content, using outside agencies if needed.

### **6.4 Staff**

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-science components of RSE.

### **6.5 Pupils**

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

## 7. Parents' right to withdraw

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

- Inform families about the school's RSE policy and practice.
- Answer any questions that families may have about the RSE of their child.
- Take seriously any issue that families raise with teachers or governors about this policy or the arrangements for RSE in the school.
- Parents have the right to withdraw their children from those aspects of Sex and Relationship education, not included in the Science Curriculum.

Relationship and Sex Education is compulsory in all secondary schools (including academies, maintained and independent schools), from September 2020, through the Children and Social Work Act, 2017. This applies to every school whether it is maintained, academy, free school or independent.

Parents 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.

In line with the Government statutory guidance on Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health 2019 there is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education as the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record. A member of staff will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action. Alternative appropriate, purposeful work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from RSE.

Relationships and sex topics can arise incidentally in other subjects including art, drama and English literature. It is not possible to withdraw pupils from these relatively limited and often unplanned discussions. A parent's choice to withdraw a child from RSE does not affect the child's right to use confidential health services provided at the school or elsewhere.

When families are aware that certain topics or sensitive issues may be difficult for a child, they are asked to contact the Head of Year to discuss this further. This may result in alternative arrangements being made for a time limited period to support the student.

See Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE.



## 8. Confidentiality and Safeguarding

Teachers understand that, to some extent, confidentiality during RSE lessons must be acknowledged so that young people feel that they are in a 'safe space' where they can ask questions. Lessons should reinforce that, if pupils have any personal concerns or wish to talk about any of the issues raised in the lesson, they should feel comfortable speaking to their class teacher or another member of the staff about this.

Where there are safeguarding issues raised school staff are aware of their responsibility to share the information and follow statutory procedures in accordance with the Trust Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy to protect and keep pupils safe.

## 9. Policy Development

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents as required by the Department for Education. We are committed to on-going consultation with families and stakeholders throughout the evolution of our school's relationships and sex education programme. This process involved the following steps.

- Review – of all relevant information including national and local guidance.
- Staff consultation – staff had the opportunity to look at the policy and to make recommendations.
- Parent consultation – parents were invited feedback on the policy and to make recommendations through a Microsoft form <https://forms.office.com/e/s9b6E4mu0B>
- Pupil consultation – we spoke to pupils about the skills they would like to learn.  
The policy has been written with reference to Beckfoot Trust anti-bullying, child protection and safeguarding policy and equality religious and cultural needs policy. In addition, reference has been made to the relevant local protocols.
- Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was ratified by the Local Schools Committee (LSC) and this was notified to the Trust Board.

## Appendix 1: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

Families may choose to complete a form and send it into school or complete an electronic form linked - <https://forms.office.com/e/ZnPMNSqBKc>

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS / CARERS			
Name of child		Form	
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			
Agreed actions from discussion with parents	<i>Include notes from discussions with parents and agreed actions taken. What are alternative arrangements for the student during these lessons?</i>		