

Relationship and sex education policy

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Definition

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. It involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. It is also about the teaching of sex, sexuality and sexual health. (DfE 0116/2000)

Aims

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity. The aim 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 relationships and families
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence, and empathy
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality, diversity, and relationships.
- Reduce early sexual activity, teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, sexual exploitation and abuse, domestic violence and bullying.
- Be inclusive of difference: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, ethnicity, culture, age, faith or belief, or other life experiences.
- Help pupils keep themselves safe from harm, both on and offline, enjoy their relationships and build confidence in accessing services if they need help and advice

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.

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
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Developing self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising 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 to develop parenting skills
- How to recognise and manage emotions within a range of relationships
- How to deal with risky or negative relationships including all forms of bullying (including the distinct challenges posed by online bullying) 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.

3. 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

Relationship and sex education content

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

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 some SEND pupils in Beckfoot Thornton mainstream and for pupils in the Designated Specialist Provision (DSP) to meet the specific needs of children at different developmental stages.

Roles and responsibilities

The local school committee

The Local School Committee 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 pupils from non-science components of RSE(see below).

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 component of RSE

Pupils

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

Parents right to withdraw

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.

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

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.

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 to feedback on the policy and make recommendations
- Pupil consultation – we spoke to pupils about the skills they would like to learn. The policy has been written in adherence to the Beckfoot Thornton anti-bullying policy, child protection and safeguarding policy and the Beckfoot Trust equality, religious and cultural needs policy
- 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

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			

TO BE COMPLETED BY THE SCHOOL	
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>