



# Relationship and sex education policy

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## Contents

1. Aims.....	2
2. Statutory requirements .....	2
3. Policy development.....	3
4. Definition .....	3
5. Curriculum .....	3
6. Delivery of RSE .....	3
7. Use of external organisations and materials .....	5
8. Roles and responsibilities .....	6
9. Parents’ right to withdraw .....	7
10. Training .....	7
11. Monitoring arrangements.....	7
Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school students should know .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

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### 1. Aims

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

- › Provide a framework in which sensitive discussions can take place
- › Prepare students for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- › Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy
- › Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- › Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

At Pittville School, we believe that relationships matter. Our core values of respect, honesty and kindness should be evident and considered in all elements of relational practice at our school.

### 2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSE to all students under the [Children and Social Work Act 2017](#).

In teaching RSE, we must have regard to [guidance](#) issued by the secretary of state, as outlined in section 403 of the [Education Act 1996](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
  - Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
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- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

At Pittville School we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

### **3. Policy development**

This policy has been developed in consultation with staff, students and parents. The consultation and policy development process involved the following steps:

1. Review – a member of staff pulled together all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
2. Staff consultation – all school staff were given the opportunity to look at the policy and make recommendations
3. Parent/stakeholder consultation
4. Student consultation – we investigated what exactly students want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified

### **4. Definition**

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity.

RSE involves a combination of sharing information, and exploring issues and values.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

### **5. Curriculum**

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, students and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that students are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

### **6. Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within the relationship, social, health and economic (RSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE). Currently, RSHE lessons are timetabled fortnightly for all students. RSHE is delivered by each group's tutor unless external agencies such as our Schools Beat Officer or

theatre groups are invited to deliver. Student with special educational needs are supported, where relevant, by Teaching Assistants who receive the same training and support as the tutor team. Furthermore, the Safeguarding Team will highlight key individuals who may be triggered by certain themes / topics, and who are therefore provided with additional support. All sessions include signposting for further support.

Sex education is delivered within this curriculum model.

RSE focuses on giving young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds including:

- Families
- Respectful relationships, including friendships
- Online and media
- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure that there is no stigmatisation of children based on their home circumstances (families can include single parent families, LGBTQ+ parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents and foster parents/carers, amongst other structures), along with reflecting sensitively that some young people may have a different structure of support around them (for example, looked-after children or young carers).

We will also be mindful of the law and legal requirements, taking care not to condone or encourage illegal political activity, such as violent action against people, criminal damage to property, hate crime, terrorism or the illegal use of drugs.

## **6.1 Inclusivity**

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel:
  - Safe and supported
  - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
  - A whole-class setting
  - Small groups or targeted sessions
  - 1-to-1 discussions
  - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

## 6.2 Use of resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

## 7. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that an agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
    - Are age-appropriate
    - Are in line with students' developmental stage
    - Comply with:
      - This policy
      - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
      - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
      - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
      - The [Education Act 1996](#)
  - Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
  - Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
  - Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
  - Be clear on:
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- What they're going to say
- Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

## 8. Roles and responsibilities

### 8.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy, and hold the headteacher 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 managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSE (see section 9).

### 8.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSHE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non statutory components of RSE

Staff do not have the right to opt out of teaching RSHE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSHE are encouraged to discuss this with the headteacher.

All teaching staff have responsibility for teaching RSHE to their tutor group.

### 8.4 Students

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

## **9. Parents' right to withdraw**

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the headteacher.

A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

Alternative school work will be given to students who are withdrawn from sex education.

## **10. Training**

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSHE as part of their induction and it is included in our continuing professional development calendar.

The headteacher will 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 RSHE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment system and through our whole school quality assurance procedures.

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.