

# *Relationships and Sex Education Policy Cover Note*

## **What will be taught?**

In Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), students learn about subjects including families, friendships, intimate/sexual relationships, professional relationships and being safe and healthy within these relationships.

We consistently consider how identity may shape relationships. We aim to help our students to explore the perspective of those who are LGBTQ+, adopted or have another variation within their relationship. We also ensure that our students are taught the rules and principles that apply to relationships according to UK law. Our curriculum is designed to be supportive of our students personal development. Therefore, we provide age appropriate content which looks at issues that shape teenage relationships; being safe online, and appropriate boundaries in peer friendships. Students also learn how to recognise if relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe and how to act if they feel unsafe or concerned.

RSE builds on what is learned at primary level: that there are different types of relationships, and the importance of those relationships in one's future, in particular in developing families and raising children. It also covers why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into, alongside different types of child-on-child abuse or bullying (including cyber bullying), and the concepts and laws relating to sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, honour-based violence and female genital mutilation (FGM).

## **Can parents withdraw their children from RSE?**

Currently, parents have the right to withdraw their children from sex education. The right to withdraw applies to sex education only, and not to relationships education more widely. Please see section 9 for more detail of the areas from which parents have right to withdraw.

The revised guidance sets out **two steps** for future requests to withdraw a child:

- Parents have the right to *request* to the head teacher that their child is withdrawn from sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.
- The request would be granted in all but exceptional circumstances, which are relating to safeguarding issues. This would apply until three terms before a child turned 16, at which point a child would be able to opt-in to sex education for one term if they so choose.

## **Current teaching:**

As aforementioned, our PSHE Curriculum develops student knowledge in the RSE and health primary topics as well as delivering the additional secondary topics as outlined in the statutory guidance (see section 2).

The curriculum map, workbooks and assessments are all planned to encompass the statutory guidance and written to underpin retention of the topics outline which all students should know by the end of secondary school.<sup>1</sup>

The statutory guidance demonstrates that the most effective practice is seen when there is a subject lead and a direct link to SLT which has been developed between Jennifer Kennedy (Personal Development Lead) and Antigone Harries (PSHE and Curriculum Lead).

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<sup>1</sup> Appendix 1



# ***Relationships and Sex Education Policy***

*(for September 2024)*

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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 pupils for puberty, and give them an understanding of sexual development and the importance of health and hygiene
- Help pupils develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy in order for them to make informed choices about healthy relationships
- Create an open, tolerant and positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Inform pupils of key aspects of the law relating to sexuality and relationships
- Equip pupils with the information to identify and report abuse, including child-to-child abuse
- Foster a culture of respectful language relating to sexuality and relationships

## **2. Statutory requirements**

As a maintained secondary school we must provide RSE to all pupils as per 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.

Our RSE curriculum follows the DfE Statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers on Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (updated September 2022).

In line with our local council guidance, we will adhere to the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership Protocol for managing child to child sexual violence, abuse and harassment in schools, settings and colleges.

## **3. Policy development**

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

1. Review – a member of staff or working group 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 – parents and any interested parties had an opportunity to comment on the policy, which was sent to them electronically
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want from their RSE
5. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified
6. Annual review – the policy is reviewed by the governors on an annual basis
7. Statutory updates – update the policy in line with relevant research and most recent statutory guidance
8. Next scheduled policy review: Oct 2025

#### 4. Definition and purpose

The DfE outlines Secondary RSE as follows:

*“Pupils should understand the benefits of healthy relationships to their mental wellbeing and self-respect. Through gaining the knowledge of what a healthy relationship is like, they can be empowered to identify when relationships are unhealthy. They should be taught that unhealthy relationships can have a lasting, negative impact on mental wellbeing.*

*...Pupils should be taught the facts and the law about sex, sexuality, sexual health and gender identity in an age-appropriate and inclusive way. All pupils should feel that the content is relevant to them and their developing sexuality. Sexual orientation and gender identity should be explored at a timely point and in a clear, sensitive and respectful manner.*

*...It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens.*

*Schools may choose to explore faith, or other perspectives, on some of these issues in other subjects such as Religious Education.*

*Pupils should be well informed about the full range of perspectives and, within the law, should be well equipped to make decisions for themselves about how to live their own lives, whilst respecting the right of others to make their own decisions and hold their own beliefs. Key aspects of the law relating to sex which should be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.*

*Grooming, sexual exploitation and domestic abuse, including coercive and controlling behaviour, should also be addressed sensitively and clearly. Schools should address the physical and emotional damage caused by female genital mutilation (FGM). They should also be taught where to find support and that it is a criminal offence to perform or assist in the performance of FGM or fail to protect a person for whom you are responsible from FGM. As well as addressing this in the context of the law, pupils may also need support to recognise when relationships (including family relationships) are unhealthy or abusive (including the unacceptability of neglect, emotional, sexual and physical abuse and violence, including honour-based violence and forced marriage) and strategies to manage this or access support for oneself or others at risk. Schools should also be mindful that for pupils who are or have experienced unhealthy or unsafe relationships at home or socially, the school may have a particularly important role in being a place of consistency and safety where they can easily speak to trusted adults, report problems and find support.*

***Internet safety should also be addressed...Some pupils are also exposed to harmful behaviours online, and via other forms of media, which may normalise violent sexual behaviours. A focus on healthy relationships and broader Relationships Education can help young people understand acceptable behaviours in relationships.”***5. Curriculum

The curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1. The RSE Curriculum is taught as part of our wider PSHE Curriculum but is mapped out discretely to demonstrate adherence to statutory guidance as well as our individual school aims.

The School has developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, considering the age, needs and feelings of pupils.

The RSE curriculum, alongside our PSHE curriculum, is mapped, resourced and assessed in the same manner as our subjects to demonstrate the importance of the comprehension and long-term retention of its content.

## **6. RSE and Safeguarding Children**

At Central Foundation Boys' School, we believe that alongside our safeguarding procedures, educating every pupil about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, how to care for their bodies and protect themselves from physical and emotional harm is an important element of our work to keep pupils safe from harm. RSE within PSHE education enables pupils to:

- understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour
- know their rights to be protected and kept safe
- understand potential dangers they could face
- be encouraged to adopt safe and responsible practices and deal sensibly with risk
- develop personal skills to protect themselves and others from unsafe influences and physical and emotional harm
- know when, how and who to ask for help.

Effective RSE is an important part of our work to address sexual abuse and sexual harassment, ensuring pupils, in an age and stage appropriate way, understand what respectful behaviour looks like, consent and that sexual violence and sexual harassment is always wrong.

Effective RSE, in bringing an understanding of what is and is not appropriate in a relationship, and providing a safe space, can occasionally lead to disclosure of a child protection issue. All staff have a duty to report concerns about pupils who we feel are at risk of harm or have suffered harm, to the DSL or a deputy, as described in our safeguarding policy.

Teachers will let the DSL and other relevant staff know when they are teaching these topics, so we are all prepared to support pupils who disclose or are affected by the issues. Our focus on relationships education will help children who are experiencing or witnessing unhealthy relationships know where to seek help and report abuse.

Visiting speakers when working in the classroom are bound by the same conditions and must pass on any information they feel needs responding to via the member of school staff present or directly to the school's DSL.

Any concerns staff may have regarding the teaching of RSE or concerning behaviour shown by students in relation to RSE will be logged on our safeguarding software (Edaware) and the DSL notified.

### **Safeguarding young people who may be involved in underage sexual activity**

Sexual activity is illegal for young people under the age of 16.

It will always be necessary to refer to CSC/Police cases of sexual activity involving children under the age of 13, because this is a serious offence and indicates a risk of significant harm to the child. A strategy discussion will be held to discuss the appropriate next steps.

Sexual activity with a child under the age of 16 is also an offence. Where it is consensual it may be less serious than if the child were under 13 years, but may nevertheless have serious consequences for the welfare of the child.

In every case of sexual activity involving a child aged 13 to 15 there should be a discussion with the CSC Referral and Advice team as to whether a referral should be made. Section 10.2 of the London CP Procedures<sup>2</sup> state:

‘Under the Sexual Offences Act, penetrative sex with a child under 13 is classed as rape. Where a practitioner is concerned that a child is involved with penetrative sex, or other intimate sexual activity, there will always be reasonable cause to suspect that a child, whether girl or boy, is suffering or is likely to suffer Significant Harm’

Section 10.3 states

‘Sexual activity with a child under 16 is also an offence. Where it is consensual it may be less serious than if the child were under 13, but may nevertheless have serious consequences for the welfare of the young person. Consideration should be given in every case of sexual activity involving a child aged 13-15 as to whether there should be a discussion with other agencies and whether a referral should be made to children's social care.’

Therefore, any disclosures relating to sexual activity should be considered as a safeguarding concern and immediately reported to the DSL.

## **7. Delivery of RSE**

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum.

The PSHE curriculum may be complemented by work in other areas, including:

- Science - biological aspects
- English - discussion or written work stemming from fiction and non-fiction
- Drama - conflict resolution, role play
- RE - moral issues, religious views, ethical viewpoints
- Geography - family planning and population
- I.T.- e-safety that teaches about the escalating risks faced by young people
- Assembly External sources: theatre groups and lessons by the safer schools police officer
- Support agencies: Brook and the LEA Healthy Schools team.

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

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendix 1.

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, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers

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<sup>2</sup> [10. Safeguarding Sexually Active Children \(londoncp.co.uk\)](http://londoncp.co.uk)

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).

## **8. Roles and responsibilities**

### **8.1 The governing board**

The governing body Teaching & Learning committee 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 pupils from non-statutory/non-science components of RSE (see section 8).

### **8.3 Curriculum Lead and PSHE Coordinator**

The Curriculum Lead and PSHE Coordinator are responsible for the consistent review of the Curriculum and implementation of research-based and statutory guidance. Both are responsible for monitoring outcomes and intervening as appropriate.

### **8.4 Staff**

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Deliver RSE in conjunction with the aims set out in section 1
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE and tolerance of variation within relationships
- Monitoring and assessment of progress
- Responding to the needs of individual pupils
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory/non-science 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 this with the headteacher.

The members of staff responsible for the delivery of RSE are Ms Kennedy, Personal Development and Ms Harries, PSHE and Curriculum Lead.

### **8.5 Pupils**

Pupils 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**

The government guidance on relationship and health education, and the science national curriculum details what must be taught in secondary schools. This includes teaching in science about reproduction in humans including the male and female reproductive systems, menstrual cycle, gametes, fertilisation, gestation, birth and HIV/AIDS. Health education requires pupils to learn about the main changes that take place in adolescence, and implications for emotional and physical health. Relationships education includes teaching about intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health. Appendix 1 shows when we teach the different aspects of this curriculum.

We believe that sex education is best taught as part of an integrated programme of relationships and sex education (RSE) within PSHE education, in which sex is discussed in the context of respectful, healthy, adult relationships. Parents can choose to withdraw their children from these elements of our RSE programme (**the sex education element**). The DfE guidance does not distinguish sex education from relationships education, the Islington health and wellbeing team have identified these two learning outcomes from the guidance as sex education with the rest forming part of relationships education. Therefore, parents may withdraw their child from the below:

- Pupils learn the range of available sexual health and relationship services, what they offer and how to access them
- Pregnancy choices including abortion

## **10. Training**

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

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 relevant senior leaders through drop in lesson observations, book monitoring and line management meetings.

Pupil progress in RSE is monitored by class teachers and the PSHE Coordinator as part of our internal assessment systems with use of DPR.

The core content which all students are expected to know (Appendix 1) will be incorporated into assessments for Key Stage 3 and 4. These assessments will be used to identify common misconceptions relating to RSE as well as short and long-term curriculum amendments to ensure all students leave Central Foundation Boys' School equipped with a rigorous, accurate and appropriate set of knowledge relating to RSE and health.

Any safeguarding concerns arise from the teaching of RSE will be logged on Edaware and our DSL notified.

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Governing Body Teaching & Learning Committee on an annual basis.

Last reviewed: 5 December 2024

**\*\*CURRICULUM MAP TO BE INSERTED BY 22/10/2021\***

Appendix 1: By the end of secondary school pupils should know

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• That there are different types of committed, stable relationships</li><li>• How these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children</li><li>• What marriage is, including their legal status e.g. that marriage carries legal rights and protections not available to couples who are cohabiting or who have married, for example, in an unregistered religious ceremony</li><li>• Why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into</li><li>• The characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships</li><li>• The roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of children, including the characteristics of successful parenting</li><li>• 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 to recognise this in others' relationships); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed</li></ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Respectful relationships, including friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships (in all contexts, including online) including: trust, respect, honesty, kindness, generosity, boundaries, privacy, consent and the management of conflict, reconciliation and ending relationships. This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationship</li> <li>• Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships</li> <li>• 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)</li> <li>• That in school and in wider society they 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</li> <li>• About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help</li> <li>• That some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control</li> <li>• What constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable</li> <li>• The 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</li> </ul>
Online and media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online</li> <li>• About 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</li> <li>• Not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them</li> <li>• What to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online</li> <li>• The impact of viewing harmful content</li> <li>• That specifically 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</li> <li>• That sharing and viewing indecent images of children (including those created by children) is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties including jail</li> <li>• How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online</li> </ul>

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
Being safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, honour-based violence and FGM, and how these can affect current and future relationships</li> <li>• How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn (in all contexts, including online)</li> </ul>
Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How to recognise the characteristics and positive aspects of healthy one-to-one intimate relationships, which include mutual respect, consent, loyalty, trust, shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship</li> <li>• That all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing</li> <li>• The facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women</li> <li>• That there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others</li> <li>• That they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex</li> <li>• The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy and options available</li> <li>• The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage</li> <li>• That there are choices in relation to pregnancy (with medically and legally accurate, impartial information on all options, including keeping the baby, adoption, abortion and where to get further help)</li> <li>• How the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV/AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing</li> <li>• About the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment</li> <li>• How the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour</li> <li>• How to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment</li> </ul>

Appendix 2: Parent form: withdrawal from sex education within RSE

TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENTS			
Name of child		Class	
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	