



Relationship Sex Education Policy

Frequency of review	Every year
Author	Priya Bhagrath – Headteacher
Approved by	July 2026 - LGB
Reviewed	July 2026
Date of next review	July 2027

Introductory statement

This policy covers Bishopswood School's whole school approach to Relationships and Sex Education (RSE).

RSE is vital for the personal, social and emotional development of our pupils. It equips children and young people with the information, skills and values they need to have safe, respectful and enjoyable relationships and empowers them to take responsibility for their sexual health and well-being. At Bishopswood school we feel it is important to support our pupils with this in the most appropriate way taking into account of each child's level of development and individual need.

All children and young people have a right to holistic, inclusive and **needs-led** RSE. Through providing high quality RSE, we are upholding the ethos and values of our school and its commitment to equality and celebration of difference.

We will review the policy on a regular basis to ensure that it is in line with current Government guidance and legislation and to ensure that our RSE programme continues to meet the needs of our pupils.

Policy Statement

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy, E-Safety Policy and Teaching and Learning Policy

In planning and delivering RSE, the school will have due regard to the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty. Teaching will reflect current legislation, be inclusive of all pupils, and be adapted appropriately to meet the needs of pupils with SEND, taking account of pupils' age, stage of development, maturity and family backgrounds.

We seek to ensure our curriculum gives pupils the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that will help them to (secondary aged pupil statements in **red** based on where stage appropriate):

- value their health (**including sexual health**) wellbeing and dignity
- build self-esteem and self-worth
- accept and value their personal and identity (**sexual identity**) and the personal/**sexual** identities of others
- understand and make sense of the real-life issues they are experiencing in the world around them

- manage and explore difficult feelings and emotions
- consider how their choices affect their own wellbeing and that of others
- develop as informed and responsible citizens
- understand and ensure the protection of their rights throughout their lives.
- build positive relationships online and offline

High quality, comprehensive RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation but in fact builds young people's confidence and self-esteem and helps them understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity.

Evidence shows² that effective RSE plays a role in behaviour change, including reducing unprotected or unwanted sex and reducing harmful behaviour, including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

British Values

Through Relationships and Sex Education, the school promotes the fundamental British Values of mutual respect, individual liberty, the rule of law, democracy and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs. These values underpin our commitment to equality, inclusion and respectful relationships.

Subject content

Our curriculum is planned as a progressive programme of learning that is age-appropriate, evidence-informed and responsive to the needs of our pupils. Content is sequenced to build knowledge and understanding over time and is adapted where necessary to meet individual needs, including those of pupils with SEND.

At Bishopswood School, we teach to the learning objectives and content outlined in the DfE Relationships Education, RSE and Health Education Guidance which we have fully integrated into our own school curriculum.

Online safety forms an integral part of the RSE curriculum. Teaching includes digital relationships, respectful online behaviour, privacy, consent, harmful online content, image sharing, social media, online exploitation, and where appropriate, emerging technologies. Content is reviewed regularly to reflect changes in technology and safeguarding risks.

SEND statement:

Relationships and Sex Education will be accessible to all pupils. Learning will be appropriately differentiated to reflect pupils' age, developmental stage, communication needs and SEND while maintaining high expectations. Staff will make reasonable adjustments to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum safely and meaningfully.

Subject delivery

RSE will be delivered at Bishopswood School as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum, which has planned, timetabled lessons across all key stages, using a spiral curriculum approach.

RSE will address aspects of relationships and sex in an integrated way within a single topic. We will not artificially separate learning about real life and online relationships when it is appropriate to integrate this teaching and explore a topic in both contexts. Where an issue is experienced exclusively or disproportionately in an online context, this will be drawn out.

We also use external agencies, where appropriate, to deliver aspects of Relationships and Sex Education (see 'Working with visitors and external agencies' section below).

The programme will be delivered in a non-judgemental, factual way, using the correct medical terms where appropriate (e.g. for external body parts). School staff will not express or be expected to express their personal views or beliefs when delivering the programme.

All staff who have responsibility for delivering RSE will undergo training on a regular basis to ensure they are up to date with the RSE policy and curriculum requirements regarding RSE.

In addition to ongoing training, CPD will also be scheduled in response to updates to our RSE scheme of work and any new development in terms of course content.

Monitoring and Evaluation

RSE is part of our learning cycle which undergoes regular monitoring and evaluating

This policy will be reviewed by the school's leadership team in conjunction with Teachers and Governors on a regular basis. If changes are needed, members of staff, parents/carers and pupils will be consulted, and any amendments clearly communicated.

Pupil voice

Throughout our RSE scheme of work we embed pupil voice practices wherever possible appropriate to the pupils age and stage of development. Where appropriate, ground rules for pupils will be set at the beginning of each unit of work. Once ground rules have been set, we will check they are in place throughout the scheme.

We aim to:

- enable pupils to express their views on the range of topics and issues that RSE covers.
- ensure that all pupil voices are heard but that those views that are hurtful, offensive or exclusionary do not dominate and are addressed appropriately and without delay.
- ensure a culture where human rights, social justice, inclusion and diversity are promoted.

Answering pupil questions

RSE explores a range of issues that may provoke questions from pupils. We view questions as a positive sign that pupils are engaged with what is being taught and feel able to express natural curiosities about themselves, their bodies and relationships with others.

We aim to:

- ensure pupils have every opportunity to ask any question they might have and to avoid loss of dignity for all, school
- offer pupils the chance to contribute questions anonymously in advance of specific lessons (e.g. on puberty). This will enable staff to research questions and respond with factually accurate information.
- when relevant and appropriate, we will answer it to the whole group. There may occasionally be the need to deal with a question outside of the classroom if it is not suitable for the entire class. If school staff do not feel in position to immediately address questions, they may defer a question and seek more information before responding to pupils.
- always answer questions in an age and developmentally appropriate way
- inform parents/carers if staff have concerns about pupil contributions or questions and take into account whether a parent/carer has requested their child to be removed from sex education lessons. School staff will not be expected to answer personal questions about themselves or to ask direct personal questions of their pupils that could make either party vulnerable.
- have an open approach to answering questions preventing pupils from learning inaccurate or harmful information **online** or from peers and older pupils.

Confidentiality

Staff will create a safe and supportive environment in which pupils feel able to ask questions and seek advice. However, staff cannot offer or guarantee confidentiality where a pupil discloses information that indicates they or another person may be at risk of harm. In such circumstances, safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

Working with parents/carers

Successful teaching of RSE involves parents/ carers and schools working together. We also believe that parents/ carers can play an important role in the RSE of their children through exploring discussions at home that have taken place in school.

Our RSE policy has been developed through consulting parents and carers.

Relationships and Sex Education is delivered throughout the academic year as part of our planned PSHE and wider curriculum. Parents and carers are kept informed about the content their child will be learning through termly curriculum maps and, where appropriate, class-specific RSE information letters.

Parents and carers who wish to discuss the curriculum in more detail or view the teaching resources are encouraged to contact their child's class teacher in the first instance. We are committed to working in partnership with families and welcome the opportunity to discuss any questions, concerns or individual circumstances.

If parents/carers have any concerns or special circumstances that the school should be aware of, or would like further information about the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum, an appointment can be arranged with the class teacher or a member of the senior leadership team to discuss these in more detail.

Parental right to request their child be excused from sex education

As outlined within the Statutory Guidance, parents/carers have the right to request their child be withdrawn from all or part of sex education lessons that are delivered as part of RSE.

- Parents/carers do not have a right to withdraw their child from Relationships Education.
- Parents/carers do not have the right to withdraw their child from any sex education delivered as part of the Science curriculum.
- Parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from Health Education.

Although parents/carers have the right to request to withdraw their child from any or all of sex education as part of Relationships Education, it is our aim to encourage parents to see the value of RSE learning and its contribution to keeping children safe, developing their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and for promoting equality and social justice.

Should a parent decide that they do not wish their child to take part in any of these lessons, we would ask that they first speak to the headteacher to discuss their concerns. The headteacher will discuss the request with the parent/carer to fully understand and address any concerns/objections to the content of the curriculum.

If parents/carers do decide to withdraw their child, they should inform the headteacher in writing and the school will keep a record of this.

We will remind parents annually that the request to withdraw is still in place and invite them to confirm whether they still want it.

Working with visitors and external agencies

From time-to-time Bishopswood School may invite external experts and visitors to deliver parts of our RSE scheme of work. External visitors may include social workers, community police officers, theatre companies and charities such as NSPCC.

External visitors will be selected in order to enrich and supplement our RSE by bringing particular skills, methods and expertise to the classroom and the whole school.

A teacher will always be present throughout these lessons to build on the pupil's learning after the session/s as well as answer any questions the pupils may subsequently have.

The class teacher remains responsible for the planning, delivery and quality assurance of all learning. External visitors enhance rather than replace the school's planned curriculum, and all resources and materials used by visitors will be reviewed by the school to ensure they are age-appropriate, accurate and consistent with statutory guidance.

Safeguarding and child protection

Bishopswood School acknowledges that RSE is crucial for creating a culture of safeguarding within the school and for meeting our statutory obligations as outlined in Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2024).

We recognise that when discussing some of the issues RSE covers, some pupils could disclose abuse or other harmful experiences.

RSE helps children to

- understand the difference between healthy and abusive relationships
- understand how to get help if they are experiencing abuse or have experienced abuse.

In cases of a disclosure, all staff have statutory training around child protection and will follow the schools safeguarding policy and procedures.

We also recognise that some children may be vulnerable to some of the content delivered in RSE due to a previous safeguarding concern, ongoing concerns or changes to their personal life. For those children, additional support will be given to prevent them being affected by the scenarios or topics in their planned lessons.

While Bishopswood School wants to create a learning space that feels safe for children and young people to disclose, we also want to protect children's privacy.

Statement by the Governing Board/Trust

Policy adopted by the Governing Board: 30 June 2024

Last reviewed: July 2026

Next scheduled review: July 2027 (or sooner if statutory guidance or legislation changes)

In adopting this policy, the Governing Board recognises its responsibility for ensuring the policy is implemented effectively, including that the subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures that the school fulfils its legal obligations.

Reference:

This policy complies with the school's statutory obligations to deliver Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE), and Health Education under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and has been developed with due regard to the following legislation and guidance:

- Department for Education (2019) *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (statutory guidance – current until 31 August 2026).
- Department for Education (2025) *Review of the RSHE Statutory Guidance: Government Consultation Response* (to support future curriculum planning ahead of implementation from September 2026).
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (latest edition).
- Equality Act 2010.
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019.
- Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- Education Act 2002.
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (where applicable).
- Human Rights Act 1998.

Glossary and appendix:

¹ LGBT+ refers to people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, and to people with gender expressions outside traditional norms, including nonbinary, intersex, and other queer people (and those questioning their gender identity or sexual orientation).

² <https://www.sexeducationforum.org.uk/resources/evidence/sre-evidence> - Briefing which aims to provide an accessible and accurate summary of the research evidence relating to relationships and sex education (RSE), particularly the contribution of RSE to behaviour change. It includes findings about RSE from the third British National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles (Natsal).