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# RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY

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Approved by	Local Governing Committee
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## 1. Policy Statement

*We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10)*

Today's children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal, and social lives in a positive way.

Personal, Social, Health Relationship and Sex Education (PSHRE) makes a significant contribution to developing this understanding and the key characteristics needed for students to lead safe, healthy, and fulfilling lives.

## 2. Objectives of the Policy

The objectives of PSHRE at Brian Clarke are to:

- Contribute to the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental, and physical development of students.
- Support the mission statement of the school, summarised as Ambition, Community, Excellence
- Equip students who are members of distinct faith communities to take their place in a rapidly changing and challenging world.
- 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.

## 3. Definitions

Relationship and Sex Education:

- Involves learning about the emotional, social, and cultural development of students.
- Involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity, and personal identity.
- Involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values.
- Is not about the promotion of sexual activity or sexual orientation.

## 4. Statutory Requirements

As a secondary school we must provide RSE to all students as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017. In teaching RSE, we are required by our funding agreements to have regard to guidance issued by the secretary of state as outlined in section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

Our policy is also underpinned by and compliant with:

- DfE Relationship, Sex and Health Education Guidance 2021
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2023
- Equality Act 2010

## 5. Policy and Curriculum Development

This policy and the curriculum have been developed in consultation with staff, students, and parents across our Trust schools.

The process involved the following steps:

Review – a working group which included the Assistant Headteacher responsible for Personal Development and Heads of Year reviewed provision from last year and mapped out relevant changes to the curriculum based on the needs of the cohort.

Stakeholder consultation and feedback – the school's Parent Forum were shown the curriculum maps and relevant resources to give any insight and feedback on provision and concerns and how we might address these as a school moving forward,

Student consultation – the student council were asked their opinions on the challenges they face, and support needed to help them make informed choices and stay safe in relation to Sex and Relationship Education (SRE).

Data Analysis – trends and patterns in terms of pastoral data were analysed to inform curriculum planning, development, and responsiveness.

## 6. Curriculum

We have developed the PSHRE curriculum using the above processes and alongside the DfE statutory framework for RSE (2020) which outlines what students should know by the end of secondary school to keep them happy, healthy, and safe (see appendix 1)

It takes into account the age, needs and feelings of students. If students ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner, so they are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

## 7. Delivery of Relationship and Sex Education (RSE)

RSE is taught within the Wellbeing education curriculum [Key-Stage-3-Wellbeing-Curriculum-Map.pdf \(brian-clarke.org\)](#) This happens once a fortnight. It is predominantly taught by form tutors but at times, expert practitioners are invited into the school to support delivery of the curriculum.

Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE) and the Computing curriculum.

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

- different types of relationships including friendships, family relationships, dealing with strangers and, at secondary school, intimate relationships
- how to recognise, understand and build healthy relationships, including self-respect and respect for other, commitment, tolerance,
- boundaries and consent; how to manage conflict; and also, how to recognise unhealthy relationships
- how relationships may affect health and wellbeing, including mental health
- healthy relationships and safety online
- factual knowledge around sex, sexual health, and sexuality
- healthy bodies and lifestyles including keeping safe, puberty, drugs, and alcohol education
- healthy minds including emotional wellbeing, resilience, mental health

For more information about the statutory requirements for RSE (**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 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). Staff are also mindful that a particular need may leave a young person more vulnerable to exploitation and therefore preparation for adult life will be particularly important.

## 8. Roles and Responsibilities

### 8.1 The Local Committee

The local committee will support and challenge the Headteacher in policy implementation and development.

## 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 8).

## 8.3 Assistant Headteacher

The assistant headteacher responsible for personal development ensures compliance with all legislation in relation to RSE and supports the pastoral Heads of Year to quality assure and monitor the impact of all aspects of provision in relation to RSE. The Assistant Headteacher also supports staff in delivering RSE by organising appropriate training.

## 8.4 Form Tutors Year 7-11

Form tutors are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in an age-appropriate sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Engaging with appropriate training to support their delivery of RSE
- 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 RSE. Staff who have concerns about teaching RSE are encouraged to discuss this with the deputy headteacher with responsibility for curriculum.

## 8.5 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 and addressed to the Headteacher.

The Headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

## 10. Training

Staff are trained on the delivery of RSE as part of their induction and bespoke support/training is scheduled when deemed appropriate to support curriculum delivery.

The Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for the personal development 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 RSE is monitored by the Assistant Headteacher and Head of Year through learning walks, termly student voice and internal data intelligence gathering. Delivery of RSE is responsive to both local and national issues.

The policy and resources which support its implementation are reviewed annually by the Assistant Headteacher responsible for the pastoral curriculum. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.

## 12. Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Statutory Framework for RSE

**By the end of secondary school**, the statutory framework for RSE (2021) states that students should know:

#### **Families**

- that there are different types of committed, stable relationships.
- how these relationships might contribute to human happiness and their importance for bringing up children.
- what marriage is, including their legal status – for example, 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.
- why marriage is an important relationship choice for many couples and why it must be freely entered into.
- the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.
- the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising of 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 to recognise this in others' relationships), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

#### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as:
- 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
- practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships
- how stereotypes, in particular stereotypes based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage (for example, how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour or encourage prejudice)
- 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
- about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to get help
- that some types of behaviour within relationships are criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control
- what constitutes sexual harassment and sexual violence and why these are always unacceptable
- 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

#### **Online and media**

- their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online
- 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
- not to provide material to others that they would not want shared further and not to share personal material which is sent to them
- what to do and where to get support to report material or manage issues online
- the impact of viewing harmful content
- that specifically sexually explicit material, for example 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
- that 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

## **Being safe**

- 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
- 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

## **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

- 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
- that all aspects of health can be affected by choices they make in sex and relationships, positively or negatively, for example physical, emotional, mental, sexual, and reproductive health and wellbeing
- the facts about reproductive health, including fertility and the potential impact of lifestyle on fertility for men and women and menopause
- that there are a range of strategies for identifying and managing sexual pressure, including understanding peer pressure, resisting pressure and not pressurising others
- that they have a choice to delay sex or to enjoy intimacy without sex
- the facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, efficacy, and options available
- the facts around pregnancy including miscarriage
- 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)
- how the different sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV and AIDs, are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex (including through condom use) and the importance of and facts about testing
- about the prevalence of some STIs, the impact they can have on those who contract them and key facts about treatment
- how the use of alcohol and drugs can lead to risky sexual behaviour
- how to get further advice, including how and where to access confidential sexual and reproductive health advice and treatment

## **The Law**

Students should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- marriage
- consent, including the age of consent
- violence against women and girls
- online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime

