



BIRCHENSALE MIDDLE SCHOOL

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Date adopted by Governors: November 2022

Date of next review: November 2024

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A Evans". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a horizontal line.

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Mr A Evans – Chair of Governors

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1. Aims

Under the new guidance issued by the DfE, by September 2020, Relationships Education will now be compulsory for all pupils at Primary age and Relationships and Sex education at Secondary. Here at Birchensale Middle School we believe for effective RSE to be taught it will be as part of an all-encompassing programme of PSHE&C education which will cover many topics. Some of which include respect and bullying, mental wellbeing, substances, careers, friendships and healthy lifestyles.

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
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach pupils the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To prepare children for healthy relationships in an online world.
- To ensure RSE is part of a child's broad, balanced curriculum, integral to the basic curriculum of the school and part of the child's all-round development.
- To understand how to stay safe, know the importance of boundaries and how to report abuse or feelings of being unsafe.
- Help pupils develop a positive and secure personal identity, a sense of their own value and feelings of confidence and empathy.

2. Statutory requirements

As a middle school academy, we must provide relationships education to all pupils as per section 34 of the Children and Social work act 2017.

We do not have to follow the National Curriculum but we are expected to offer all pupils a curriculum that is similar to the National Curriculum including requirements to teach science which would include the elements of sex education contained in the science curriculum.

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.

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

3. Policy development

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

1. Review – the PSHE&C subject leader and SLT 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 were asked to respond to the consultation about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils wanted 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 pupils, 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 and Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum

KS2 Relationships education focuses on teaching the fundamental building blocks and characteristics of positive relationships including:

- Families and people who care for me
- Caring friendships
- Respectful relationships
- Online relationships
- Being safe

Currently the NSPCC run Speak out Stay safe sessions on a two-year rolling basis with KS2.

KS2 sex education will focus on:

- Preparing boys and girls for the changes that adolescence brings
- How a baby is conceived

KS3 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 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).

Our curriculum is set out below, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

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

Our school's RSE programme will provide opportunities for children to 'talk honestly and openly'. There are also sensitive or controversial topics over which some staff, parents and governors may have reasonable concerns, which will be referred to families to discuss with their child/ren.

Every child has the right to ask questions about their own body and understanding in relation to RSE, therefore if a child asks a question which staff feel is not appropriate to explore within our RSE provisions it will be referred to families. At parental request school can also refer these questions to the school nurse, who will discuss it with the child/ren.

In some cases, a question or request for advice may indicate the pupil to be at risk or in danger, in which case appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the school's Safeguarding procedures. This also means that if a pupil puts a private question to a teacher or other member of staff and requests secrecy, no promise of secrecy or confidentiality will be given, but with the reassurance that any steps taken will always be in the pupil's best interest.

The key learning objectives covered at each age group will include:

Year 5 will learn:

- about the role of trust, respect and boundaries in healthy relationships (including friendships and family)
- how to recognise if a friendship is making them feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- how to maintain and respect privacy and boundaries, including online
- how to recognise different types of physical contact and what is, or is not, acceptable
- about seeking and giving/not giving permission in different situations
- how to seek advice or report concerns about their personal safety or that of others in a range of contexts
- about the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty
- about mutual respect, being polite and how personal behaviour can affect others
- how to listen and respond respectfully to people with a range of beliefs, traditions and lifestyles
- how to behave respectfully online
- about stereotypes and how they influence behaviour
- about the impact of bullying and hurtful behaviour, including online
- strategies for responding to bullying and hurtful behaviour witnessed or experienced how to challenge discrimination, seek help and report concerns

Year 6 will learn:

- how to manage change – new roles and responsibilities as they grow up
- how to manage the physical and emotional changes that happen during puberty
- about adult relationships and the human life cycle
- about human reproduction, how a baby is made and how it grows
- how positive friendships can support wellbeing
- how friendships change (including context such as moving home or schools)
- how to manage change in different contexts (including loss and bereavement)
- accessing appropriate support during times of change

- about empathy and how people can help to support each other in times of difficulty
- about opportunities to connect with others, including friends, online
- about what it means to 'know someone online' and how this differs to knowing someone face to face
- about why someone may behave differently online, including pretending to be someone they are not
- how to manage the risks of communicating online with others not known face-to-face
- strategies to respond to harmful behaviour, including online
- how to report concerns and access help or advice

Year 7 will learn:

- about different types of relationships and the qualities and behaviours associated with positive relationships
- about media stereotypes and their effect on relationship expectations
- how to manage expectations for romantic relationships
- how to manage strong feelings in relationships
- how to identify unhealthy relationships and seek support when necessary
- about the concept of consent how to seek and give/not give consent in a variety of contexts
- how to develop self-worth and confidence to support decision making
- to manage influences on beliefs and decisions
- strategies for managing groupthink and persuasion
- about gender identity, transphobia and gender-based discrimination; homophobia and biphobia; racism and religious discrimination; and disability discrimination
- strategies to challenge prejudice-based bullying and discrimination
- how to access support services in relation to inclusion or discrimination

Year 8 will learn:

- how to manage group friendships
- how to manage social influences, peer pressure and the desire for peer approval in a range of contexts, including in relation to substance use and anti-social behaviour
- how to manage personal safety in social situations
- how to access support and advice in relation to friendship and peer influence issues
- about why young people may join gangs and the consequences of gang behaviour
- how to access support in relation to gangs exit strategies for pressurised situations
- about relationship norms and expectations
- about forming new partnerships and developing relationships
- the impact of stereotypes on expectations of gender roles, behaviour and intimacy
- about gender identity and sexual orientation
- to recognise levels of intimacy, including readiness for sex

- about the choice to delay sex and the right to enjoy intimacy without sex

6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 The governing board

The governing board will approve the RSE policy and hold the headteacher to account for its implementation.

6.2 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 7).

6.3 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-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.

Form teachers are responsible for teaching RSE in PSHE lessons

6.4 Pupils

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

7. Parents' right to withdraw

KS2

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science components of sex education within RSE.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing using the form found in Appendix 2 of this policy and addressed to the Headteacher. The Headteacher will arrange a meeting to discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate the child, and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education, as agreed by the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record.

KS3

Parents do not have the right to withdraw their children from relationships education.

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-statutory/non-science 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. The Headteacher will arrange a meeting to discuss the request with parents and, where appropriate the child, and take appropriate action. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from Sex Education, as agreed by the headteacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the pupil's educational record.

8. Training

All members of staff who deliver any RSE have statutory training around safeguarding children and are all aware of our school's safeguarding policy and procedures in the case of a disclosure or suspicion of a safeguarding concern.

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 or to assist with the delivery of RSE. Any visitors will follow the school policy.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the Subject Leader for PSHE&C and SLT.

Pupils' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems.

Appendix 1: By the end of KS1 and KS2 school pupils should know

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Families and people who care about me | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability • The characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives • That others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care • That stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up • That marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong • How to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed |
| Caring friendships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends • The characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties • That healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded • That most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right • How to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed |

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|--------------------------|---|
| Respectful relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs • Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships • The conventions of courtesy and manners • The importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness • 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 those in positions of authority • About different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help • What a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive • The importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults |
| Online relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not • That the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous • The rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them • How to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met • How information and data is shared and used online |
| Being safe | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context) • About the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe • That each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact • How to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know • How to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult • How to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard • How to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so • Where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources |

Appendix 2: By the end of KS3 and KS4 school pupils should know

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|---|--|
| Families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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 • 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed |
| Respectful relationships, including friendships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 • 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 (e.g. 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 |

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|------------------|--|
| Online and media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 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 • 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) |

| TOPIC | PUPILS SHOULD KNOW |
|--|--|
| Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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, e.g. 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 • 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/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 |

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 | |
| | |