

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

(Non-Statutory)

Reviewed/Approved by Board of Trustees: 19/11/2024

Review Cycle: Annually

Review Date: November 2025

Aims

The Burgate School and Sixth Form believes that all students should follow a coherent, high-quality programme of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) through a well developed Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme and the school's ethos of Learning for Life.

We want every student to enjoy their learning and feel valued for who they are.

This policy underpins our Burgate Expectations:

- Be safe
- Be respectful
- Be ready to learn

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

- Provide a safe school environment in which sensitive and open discussions can take place
- Provide a broad and balanced PSHE programme that supports young people to make safe and informed choices.
- Enable students to become more independent and reflective in order to develop greater character, challenge ignorance and increase knowledge and understanding of RSE issues.
- Foster self-esteem and confidence, to combat exploitation and reduce guilt and anxiety.
- Encourage students to question and explore ideas and in turn evaluate and formulate their own opinions, beliefs and attitudes to make informed decisions.
- Help students develop feelings of self-respect, confidence and empathy.
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships and promote responsible behaviours and lifestyles.
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies

Statutory requirements

As a school we must provide RSE to all pupils 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](#).

At the Burgate School and Sixth Form we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

Policy Development

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

- Review – Key staff undertake a review of all relevant information including relevant national and local guidance
- Staff consultation – staff are given the opportunity to review the policy and make recommendations
- Parent consultation – parents are invited to take part in a review survey and ask additional questions
- Students – Student voice is sought around what RSE they feel they need

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.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is set out on our school website and is reviewed annually and adapted as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with students and staff, taking 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 do not seek answers online.

Delivery of RSE

RSE is taught within our Learning for Life and the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. Biological aspects of RSE are taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in religious education (RE).

In addition to the contributions made by the formal subjects of the curriculum, PSHE and RSE are delivered through assemblies, sixth form lectures, curriculum enrichment and targeted citizenship days. An annual audit of how RSE is taught across the school through the curriculum is undertaken.

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 social media relationships
- 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+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender/transsexual) 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).

We must 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 illegal use of drugs.

Specialist staff are used to teach those aspects of the work which are sensitive, or which require particular expertise and training. Where outside speakers and agencies are used, they will be accompanied by a member of staff.

RSE will be available to every student throughout their time at school, in a form appropriate to the student age and level of maturity.

RSE will be delivered to students in regular class sizes with some delivery in the form of seminars/assemblies and, where appropriate, support from outside speakers.

The curriculum will be co-ordinated to ensure a balanced, sensitive and progressive programme of RSE.

The RSE curriculum will make full use of resource materials, visual presentation, literature and outside speakers, details of which are available to trustees and parents on request. On occasions when an outside speaker is used, a member of the teaching staff is to be present throughout the lesson to ensure that contributions are consistent with the school policy.

We will ensure all resources are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics and are from credible sources. The resources and teaching will be in line with our whole school approach to the inclusive classroom.

The main vehicles for the teaching of RSE will be through the Learning for Life PSHE curriculum including Citizenships and Enrichment days; supported by other areas of the curriculum as appropriate, in particular Science (for factual biological aspects of sexual function), and Religious Education teaching in accordance with the National Curriculum.

The RSE programme will encompass sexual function and behaviour as one of several equally important aspects of individual development such as principles of consent, self-awareness, moral integrity, personal hygiene and health – and the factors which may influence decisions such as alcohol and drugs.

The aim of RSE is to provide balanced factual information about human reproduction, together with consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious and moral dimensions of sexual health (for example, consent, female genital mutilation and contraception), in order to prepare students for their adult life.

Personal and Social Skills

Through the RSE and PSHE programmes students will be encouraged to:

- Learn to manage emotions and relationships confidently and sensitively.
- Develop self-respect and empathy for others
- Learn to make choices with an absence of prejudice
- Develop an appreciation of the consequences of choices made (for example, consent, safer social networking, the issues of revenge pornography, sexting and greater self-respect and respect for others)
- Manage conflict
- Introduce students to the skills required to be able to avoid inappropriate pressures or advances
- Discuss all types of relationships including LGBT+ and signposting students to the relevant support agencies

Knowledge and Understanding

Through the RSE and PSHE programmes students will be encourage to:

- Learn and understand physical development at appropriate stages
- Understand human sexuality, reproduction, sexual health, emotions and relationships
- Learn about contraception and the range of local and national sexual health advice, contraception and support services
- Learn the value of delaying sexual activity and the benefits to be gained from such delay
- Know where to find/seek support within school/home and outside agencies

Roles and responsibilities

The Trustees

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

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

Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE 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/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 their pastoral lead.

In their pastoral role, teachers will be concerned with the safety and wellbeing of students in their care. When offering guidance to individual student's care must be taken to recognise the responsibilities of parents. If approached by an individual student for specific advice on sexual matters, staff should encourage the students to consult parents or a health professional. School staff will not seek out emergency contraception for our students.

Where a student confides in a member of staff no guarantee of confidentiality must be offered and the teacher concerned must consult the school's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). If a student appears to be at moral or physical risk, staff should refer the matter to the DSL who will liaise/make contact with parents, or other professional services as appropriate, in line with safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity and behave in line with the Burgate Expectations. Where a student's expectations of behaviour are not met, this will be addressed through the school's behaviour policy.

Parents' right to withdraw

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 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. See appendix 2.

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

Training

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

The pastoral lead for student wellbeing 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 as appropriate.

Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored through work scrutiny, learning walks and lesson observations.

Students' development in RSE is monitored through student voice surveys.

Links with other policies

This policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding
- Relationships & Bullying

Appendix 1: By the end of secondary 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, 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 such as civil partnerships • 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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
	defined in the Equality Act 2010) and that everyone is unique and equal
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)
Intimate and sexual	<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

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
relationships, including sexual health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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		Tutor group	
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