



# Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

Headteacher: Ms C Senior

Chair of Governors: Mr W Stone

	Date	Name	Signature
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Lead Person	Subject Leader for RS and SPCS (PSHE)	Nadine Doyle	
Prepared by	Subject Leader for RS and SPCS (PSHE)	Nadine Doyle	
Verified by	Headteacher	Carrie Senior	
Approved by	Chair of Governors	William Stone	

# Blackfen School for Girls

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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 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 and understand the emotions of themselves and others better
- › Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships, and taking responsibility for their own sexuality
- › Helping students develop an awareness and understanding of different types of relationships and consider the range of variation in sexual expression
- › Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- › Help students understand the dangers of exploitation (in person and online), providing an awareness of possible signs and what they can do to keep themselves and others safe
- › Provide factual information about sexual health - sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV and AIDS, and safe sex – along with reproduction and contraception
- › Provide students with accurate information about places they may go for information and support

## 2. Statutory requirements

The statutory guidance for relationships and sex education (RSE) was introduced in 2000 and was becoming increasingly outdated. It was failing to address a number of risks faced by young people, which have continued to grow in prevalence, especially in relation to online and social media usage. Consequently, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, made Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. Health Education also became compulsory in all schools (except independent schools) and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) continues to be compulsory in all schools.

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As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSE to all students under 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](#).

We must also have regard to our legal duties set out in:

- Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996
- Part 6, chapter 1 of the [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Public Sector Equality Duty (as set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). This duty requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

Blackfen School for Girls welcomes its duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act (Sex & Relationship Education Guidance DfE 2000). Our supplementary guidance, 'SRE for the 21st century', provides advice on new issues like online pornography, and staying safe online. This advice has been developed with charities Brook and Sex Education Forum, and has been welcomed by the DfE, and a number of prominent organisations. RSE and PSHE teach children and young people how to stay safe and healthy, and how to negotiate some of the personal and social challenges they will face growing up and as adults. These subjects form part of the building blocks young people need to thrive in modern Britain.

At Blackfen School for Girls, we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

## 3. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of young people, 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 provides knowledge and encourages the acquisition of skills and attitudes which will enable students to manage their relationships in a responsible and healthy manner.

RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

## 4. Curriculum

Our RSE curriculum is set out as per Appendix 1, but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, and taking into account the age, developmental stage, needs and feelings of our pupils. If pupils ask questions outside the scope of this policy, teachers will respond in an appropriate manner so that pupils are fully informed and don't seek answers online.

## 5. 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, and other aspects are included in Physical Education (PE), Religious Studies (RS) and Citizenship. Aspects of the RSE curriculum (e.g. moral and ethical issues, or current issues in the media) are addressed within the Pastoral Curriculum delivered during Form Time with tutors or arise from apparently unrelated topics in all National Curriculum subjects: these are secondary to the planned PSHE curriculum, and within this category as long as any discussion takes place within the context of the subject it will not be deemed to be part of the sex education programme and therefore not subject to the parental right of withdrawal.

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

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- Being safe
- Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

Students will also be encouraged to consider the importance of the following values:

- Self-restraint, dignity and valuing of themselves and others
- Understanding and sensitivity towards the needs and views of others
- Personal Responsibility for their actions
- The value of family life and the implications of parenthood

## 5.1 SEND Students

The policy of Blackfen School for Girls is that SEND students should follow the same RSE programme as all other students. When appropriate, and to ensure that the RSE Curriculum is accessible for all students, teaching will be differentiated, and content will be adapted to meet the needs of SEND students.

This will be done on a case-by-case basis, through collaboration between mainstream teaching staff, staff who specialise in SEND students in general or work closely with particularly SEND students and wider support systems as appropriate (e.g., parents or carers and specialist agencies).

When delivering RSE to SEND students, the school will be mindful of:

- The SEND Code of Practice, which includes a set of outcomes on preparing students for adulthood.
- The additional vulnerability that SEND students can face, to exploitation, bullying and other issues.
- The possibility that elements of RSE may be particularly important for some SEND students, because of the nature of a condition or disability.

For more information about our RSE curriculum, see Appendices 1 and 2.

These areas of learning are taught within the context of family life, taking care to make sure 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 and 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 will 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 the illegal use of drugs.

## 5.2 Inclusivity

We will teach about these topics in a manner that:

- Considers how a diverse range of students will relate to them
- Is sensitive to all students' experiences
- During lessons, makes students feel:
  - Safe and supported
  - Able to engage with the key messages

We will also:

- Make sure that students learn about these topics in an environment that's appropriate for them, for example in:
  - A whole-class setting
  - Small groups or targeted sessions
  - 1-to-1 discussions
  - Digital formats
- Give careful consideration to the level of differentiation needed

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## 5.3 Use of Resources

We **will** consider whether any resources we plan to use:

- Are aligned with the teaching requirements set out in the statutory RSE guidance
- Would support students in applying their knowledge in different contexts and settings
- Are age-appropriate, given the age, developmental stage and background of our students
- Are evidence-based and contain robust facts and statistics
- Fit into our curriculum plan
- Are from credible sources
- Are compatible with effective teaching approaches
- Are sensitive to students' experiences and won't provoke distress

## 6. Use of external organisations and materials

We will make sure that any agency and any materials used are appropriate and in line with our legal duties around political impartiality.

The school remains responsible for what is said to students. This includes making sure that any speakers, tools and resources used don't undermine the fundamental British values of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs.

We **will**:

- Make appropriate checks and engage with external agencies to make sure that their approach to teaching about RSE is balanced, and it and the resources they intend to use:
  - Are age-appropriate
  - Are in line with students' developmental stage
  - Comply with:
    - This policy
    - The [Teachers' Standards](#)
    - The [Equality Act 2010](#)
    - The [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
    - The [Education Act 1996](#)
- Only work with external agencies where we have full confidence in the agency, its approach and the resources it uses
- Make sure that any speakers and resources meet the intended outcome of the relevant part of the curriculum
- Review any case study materials and look for feedback from other people the agency has worked with
- Be clear on:
  - What they're going to say
  - Their position on the issues to be discussed
- Ask to see in advance any materials that the agency may use
- Know the named individuals who will be there, and follow our usual safeguarding procedures for these people
- Conduct a basic online search and address anything that may be of concern to us, or to parents and carers
- Check the agency's protocol for taking pictures or using any personal data they might get from a session
- Remind teachers that they can say "no" or, in extreme cases, stop a session
- Make sure that the teacher is in the room during any sessions with external speakers

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We **won't**, under any circumstances:

- › Work with external agencies that take or promote extreme political positions
- › Use materials produced by such agencies, even if the material itself is not extreme

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

### 7.1 The Governing Board

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

### 7.2 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 components of RSE (see section 9).

### 7.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- › Delivering RSE in a sensitive way, in line with Blackfen School for Girls' values
- › Modelling positive attitudes to RSE of equality, diversity and inclusion
- › Monitoring progress
- › Managing and responding appropriately to the needs of individual students, (e.g., SEND students, especially those in mainstream Key Stage 3 lessons)
- › Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE
- › Providing sex education in accordance with this policy, and in a way that encourages students to consider morals and the value of family life
- › Participating in training to provide sex education in line with the school curriculum policy
- › Implementing the agreed scheme of work
- › Drawing to the attention through the usual management line of any materials which they consider to be inappropriate. If staff feel the concerns have not been addressed, staff are responsible for raising the issue with the Headteacher
- › Responding appropriately to those students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from 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.

Staff responsible for teaching RSE:

- › RS and Citizenship teachers (Key Stages 3 and 4) (SL for RS is also responsible for the RSE/PSHE curriculum in Key Stage 3)
- › Head of Sixth Form and Head of Year 13 (Key Stage 5)
- › Science teachers (Biology) (Key Stages 3 and 4)
- › Any other teacher directed by the Head Teacher to teach RSE/PSHE

Subject Leaders are responsible for discussing their programmes of study with their Faculty Leader and RSE Lead (Subject Leader for RS and SPCS)

### 7.4 Students

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

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## 8. Parents' right to withdraw

The place of parents/guardians as key figures in this area of health education is acknowledged.

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 using the form found in Appendix 3 of this policy 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 the Subject Leader and parents and take appropriate action.

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

## 9. Training

Staff will be trained on the delivery of RSE, and it will be included in their continuing professional development.

The Headteacher or Subject Leader 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.

## 10. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by Mrs Nadine Doyle (Subject Leader for RS and SPCS), Mr Simon Neil (Assistant Headteacher – Curriculum, Key Stage 3) and Mrs Ruth Makepeace (Deputy Headteacher – Behaviour, Inclusion and Culture) through:

- Leadership Link Meeting – Simon Neil and Nadine Doyle
- Work Scrutiny
- Learning Walks
- Half-termly meetings between Nadine Doyle and the team teaching RSE/PSHE, with minutes fed back to Simon Neil and Fiona Minnis

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

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Subject Leader (Nadine Doyle). At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher (Carrie Senior) and the Chair of Governors (William Stone).

The Subject Leader for RS and SPCS will provide a report for the Governor's Curriculum Committee on the implementation of the PSHE curriculum once each year, outlining the teaching and learning of the curriculum and the impact on students.

## 11. Further Information

The following issues may occur as part of education. Staff, parents and students need to understand the school's procedures.

### 11.1 Confidentiality and Advice

Students who are under 16 MUST be made aware that some information cannot be held confidential, and made to understand that if certain disclosures are made certain actions will ensue. At the same time students will be offered sensitive and appropriate support. The following procedures will be adhered to by all adults.

Staff are reminded that as with other discussions of a sensitive nature, information must only be imparted according to the procedures below, and must not become common knowledge.

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## 11.2 Disclosure or suspicion of possible abuse

The school's child protection procedures will be invoked (see relevant policy).

## 11.3 Disclosure of pregnancy or advice on contraception

It is hoped that the following procedures will ensure that students who are in difficulty know that they can talk to an adult in the school and that they will be supported.

## 11.4 Disclosure of pregnancy

Students must be asked whether they can tell their parents(s) and whether they want help in doing so. If the student agrees to speak to parent(s) subsequent responsibility, then lies with the parent(s).

Staff must tell students that they will expect acknowledgement from parents within 48 hours that the discussion has taken place. The member of staff must report the information to the Head Teacher/Designated Safeguarding Officer.

If the student refuses to tell their parent(s) the Designated Safeguarding officer will refer them to a health professional. The Designated Safeguarding Officer who will then liaise with the student welfare team and Health professionals, as appropriate about informing the parents.

## 11.5 Advice on contraception / Sexual Health

Professional information will be available from a health professional e.g., School Nurse or information about Family Planning Clinics.

The school will always encourage students to talk with their parents first.

## 11.6 Family Life

The value of family life is an important aspect, which will be approached largely through a consideration of the qualities and relationships between the group of people, with an emphasis on stability, respect, caring and support.

## 11.7 Sensitive Issues

As part of the sex education programme issues of contraception HIV/AIDS, sexuality and abortion are addressed. Facts are presented in an objective and balanced way, with students being encouraged to consider their attitudes and values within the framework set out. They will be made aware of religious and cultural values and of the difference between fact and opinion.

## 11.8 Complaints Procedure

Any complaints about the sex education curriculum should be made to the Head Teacher who will report to the Governors via the Curriculum committee.

## 11.9 Parental Partnership

Under the Education Act 1993 parents have the right to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex education programme that does not fall within the National Curriculum. In fact, very few parents exercise the right.

Parents wishing to exercise that right are asked to contact the Key Stage Co-ordinators and they can be reminded of the opportunity to preview the materials before making a final decision although they are under no obligation to do so.

Once a child has been withdrawn, they cannot take part in later sex education without parental approval (see Section 9).

## Related Documents

Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Equalities Duty for Schools Policy, Special Educational Needs Policy, Teaching Standards

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## Appendix I: Curriculum map

### Relationships and sex education curriculum map

In Key Stages 3 and 4, pupils should be taught: how to maintain physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing including sexual health about parenthood and the consequences of teenage pregnancy. Pupils should learn about how to deal with risky or negative relationships, including all forms of bullying and abuse, sexual and other violence and online encounters. Finally, they should learn about the concept of consent in a variety of contexts.

**Strategic Plan 2025-2026:** Embedding the ‘spiral programme’ for Years 7 and 8, within the PSHRE curriculum, and continue with the development of the Year 9 PSHRE curriculum, working closely with the Pastoral and SEND Teams, to meet the personal developmental needs of all students.

KEY STAGE	TOPIC/THEME DETAILS	RESOURCES
Key Stage 3	Biology – Reproduction; Contraception Computing – Online Safety English – Consent; Relationships SPCS – Identity; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; Relationships; Consent; Human Rights; Religious and Political views; emotions and expectations of relationships; Assemblies – E-safety; Consent Community Time – Contraception Community Time – Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health awareness  Whole School – Identity; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; Relationships; Consent	External Agencies – The Talk ( <a href="http://www.thetalk.org.uk">www.thetalk.org.uk</a> ); EC Publishing ( <a href="https://ecpublishing.co.uk/">https://ecpublishing.co.uk/</a> ) National Curriculum Subject specific materials Student Support Officers / Leadership Team
Key Stage 4	Citizenship & RS – Human Rights; Relationships; Contraception & Family Planning; Gender Identity; Science – Reproduction; Contraception Community Time – Relationships, Diversity and Inclusion, Mental Health awareness Assemblies – E-safety; Consent Whole School – Identity; Equality, Diversity & Inclusion; Relationships; Consent	Exam Board endorsed resources External Agencies – The Talk ( <a href="http://www.thetalk.org.uk">www.thetalk.org.uk</a> ); EC Publishing ( <a href="https://ecpublishing.co.uk/">https://ecpublishing.co.uk/</a> ) Student Support Officers / Leadership Team
Key Stage 5 (Co-Ordinated separately by the Head of Sixth Form)	Social Sciences Faculty – Relationships PSHE / Pastoral Programme – Variety of PSHE and RSE topics delivered by Head and Deputy Head of Sixth Form, Sixth Form tutors and external speakers Aspects of the RSE curriculum are also covered in various subject options	External agencies and speakers

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### Appendix 2: 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>
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>

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TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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>
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>

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## Appendix 3: 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	