



The Henrietta Barnett School

Relationships and Sex Education Policy

1. Introduction

The Henrietta Barnett School aims to ensure that each student studies a broad and balanced curriculum. The Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) curriculum provides access to and a greater understanding of physical, sexual, moral and emotional development; it involves acquiring information, developing skills and forming positive beliefs, values and attitudes. This Policy was developed in response to the Department for Education (DfE) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019 ('the 2019 Regulations'), the National Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, the PSHCE Association suggested curriculum and the National Healthy Schools Programme. In particular, the 2019 Regulations make RSE compulsory for all students receiving secondary education, as well as Health Education. The School also has regard to the [statutory guidance](#) issued by the Department for Education regarding Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education (of which the current version is still in force, but which was updated in July 2025 for introduction in September 2026), and this informs the policy and teaching of RSE at the School.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other related School policies, in particular the PSHCE Policy and PSHCE Schemes of Work which are available on the School's website.

2. Aims

The aims of the School's RSE provision are to provide balanced factual information together with non-judgmental consideration of the broader emotional, ethical, religious, and moral dimensions of all relationships, including intimate relationships and sex.

Our RSE programme aims to prepare students for an adult life in which they can:

- develop positive values and a moral framework that will guide their decisions, judgements and behaviour;
- have the confidence and self-esteem to value themselves and others;
- have respect for individual conscience and the skills to judge what kind of relationships they want
- understand the consequences of their actions and behave responsibly within personal and sexual relationships
- communicate effectively by developing appropriate terminology for relationship and sex issues
- avoid being exploited or exploiting others or being pressured into or pressurising others to do anything
- develop awareness of their sexuality and understand human sexuality
- challenge sexism and prejudice, and promote equality and diversity
- have sufficient information and skills to protect themselves from the risks of unprotected sex (including conception and sexually transmitted infections)
- be aware of sources of help and acquire the skills and confidence to access confidential health advice, support and treatment if necessary
- know how the law applies to relationships and sex

3. Organisation and Content of RSE

The School specifically delivers RSE through its PSHCE Programme, Tutorial Programme, Sixth Form Life Skills programme and Science lessons at KS3 and KS4, as well as more broadly across the curriculum. Much of the RSE is delivered in dedicated weekly PSHCE lessons in each year group by a small group of teachers experienced in delivering PSHCE, with support from specialists and/or professionals where appropriate. RSE lessons are set within the wider context of the PSHCE curriculum and focus more on the emotional aspects of development and relationships, although the physical aspects of puberty are also included. The Science National Curriculum is delivered by staff in the science department. These lessons are more concerned with the physical aspects of development and reproduction.

4. Classroom Practice

At the start of each year, and throughout the course as necessary, teachers will establish clear parameters of what is appropriate and inappropriate in a whole class setting. It will be a matter of common practice that:

- No student will have to answer a personal question
- No student will be forced to take part in a discussion
- The correct RSE terminology will be used most of the time
- Sensitivity will be shown towards those of particular faith backgrounds
- Nothing should be said that could be construed as embarrassing or offensive to other students

If a question is too personal, the student will be reminded of the ground rules. If considered appropriate, the student may then be referred to the relevant health professional or outside agency via the Pastoral Team.

If a question is too explicit, is inappropriate for the whole class or raises concerns about sexual abuse, it will not be answered in front of the whole class. The member of staff will discuss any concerns with the Junior Deputy Head who is the Designated Safeguarding Lead and oversees the delivery of PSHCE. In cases of concern over sexual abuse, the School's Child Protection procedures will be followed. See the School's Safeguarding Policy for further detail.

5. Outcomes

The following statements give a basis for planning work to develop knowledge and understanding, values and attitudes and personal skills in RSE. They draw on DfE and other guidance on RSE and reflect elements of the statutory framework for PSHCE. They are also designed to take into account the School's obligations under the Equality Act 2010. These may be delivered explicitly in PSHCE or through the rest of the curriculum.

By the end of the RSE course students will know

- The benefits of committed and stable relationships and the varying forms those might take
- The consequences and legal status of long-term relationships including marriage
- The roles and responsibilities of parents and characteristics of successful parenting
- The characteristics of healthy and unhealthy relationships in all contexts (including online and including sexual relationships) and skills to improve relationships
- The reasons for delaying sexual activity
- The damaging consequences of stereotypes
- The importance of giving to and receiving respect from others
- About different types of bullying
- What constitutes abuse and sexual violence and the application of the law to such behaviour
- Our legal rights and responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010
- Our rights, responsibilities, expectations, risks and opportunities online, including the characteristics of social media, the impact of pornography, the sharing of indecent images and other problematic content

- The concepts of and laws relating to consent, grooming and sexual exploitation
- The existence of and law relating to FGM
- Facts about puberty, reproduction and reproductive health
- Strategies for identifying and managing pressure in relation to relationships, including peer pressure and sexual pressure
- Facts about the transmission of sexually transmitted infections (including HIV) and options for safer sexual relationships
- Facts about the full range of contraceptive choices
- The risk of drugs and alcohol and the influence on behaviour and decision-making and ways to manage the risks
- How to access advice and treatment in relation to sexual health in particular and physical and mental health more widely.

6. Inclusion

We intend our RSE programme to be accessed by all of our students and accessible to all our students (including taking into account the needs of those with special educational needs and disabilities).

We understand that some students or parents may require further information about content and context ahead of delivery. The Programme of Study and Schemes of Work for each year group are circulated in advance for this purpose and the Junior Deputy Head will respond to all parental requests and concerns.

7. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender content

As above, all students should understand the importance of equality and respect and will learn about protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 (which include sexual orientation and gender reassignment). We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of sexual orientation and gender identity, answer appropriate questions and offer support, incorporating this into material about relationships and sexual health. All students, whatever their sexuality or identity, need to feel that relationship and sex education is relevant to them.

8. Right of Withdrawal of Students from Relationship and Sex Education

Some parents prefer to take the responsibility for aspects of this element of education. The Regulations provide that parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from all or part of the sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education, or those parts of sex education which are included in the statutory National Curriculum (i.e. delivered in science lessons). Parents can look at the Schemes of Work to check which elements of the programme this applies to. The request is likely to be granted other than in exceptional circumstances, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child chooses to receive sex education, the school is obliged to make arrangements to provide this. Parents are encouraged to discuss their request with the Junior Deputy Head at the earliest opportunity. If a child is withdrawn from sex education, we would make suitable alternative arrangements.

9. Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues

Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and students are made aware of this at the start and throughout the RSE course. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents of any disclosure unless the Head or Designated Safeguarding Lead has specifically requested them to do so.

In a case where a member of staff learns from a student under the age of 16 year old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- the student will be encouraged, wherever possible, to talk to a parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice
- child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the Designated Safeguarding Lead under the School's procedures and social services where appropriate (see School's Safeguarding Policy)

- the student will be offered information about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services, from a member of the pastoral team or a School Nurse

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, all staff will ensure that the student understands that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, but that they will be kept informed throughout.

Medical health professionals in School are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the School's child protection policy (set out in full in the School's Safeguarding Policy).

10. Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationship and Sex Education

It is the responsibility of the Head of PSHCE, with input from the School's pastoral team and overseen by the Junior Deputy Head, to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHCE, which will include consultation with parents and students, in the context of the overall School plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

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