



Relationships and sex education Policy

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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 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
- Develop pupils' understanding of consent, personal boundaries and healthy relationship behaviours.
- Equip pupils to recognise, challenge and report harmful behaviours including harassment, exploitation, misogyny and abuse.
- Develop digital resilience and enable pupils to safely navigate online environments, including emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.
- Promote equality, inclusion and respect for protected characteristics.
- Ensure pupils know how and when to access support, safeguarding pathways and reporting mechanisms.

Relationship and sex education at Brunel college will ensure that young people are *healthy, happy and safe*. We aim to enable the pupils to make safe decisions and give them the information and tools they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It will enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like, including resisting pressure and what makes a good friend, a successful marriage, respect (for ourselves and others). The curriculum will teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships, which will help pupils understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing, identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.

RSE is also about the physical, emotional, social, moral and legal dimensions of human sexuality as well as factual teaching about sex, sexuality and sexual health. RSE is not just about having the knowledge, it is also about having the skills to make the right decisions.

In addition, Brunel College believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life
- Be an entitlement for all young people
- Encourage every pupil to contribute to make our community and aims to support each individual as they grow and learn
- Be set within this wider school context and supports family commitment and love, respect and affection, knowledge and openness. Family is a broad concept; not just one model, e.g. nuclear family. It includes a variety of types of family structure, and acceptance of different approaches
- Encourage pupils and teachers to share and respect each other's views. We are aware of different approaches to sexual orientation, without promotion of any particular family structure. The important values are love, respect and care for each other
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment
- Recognise that parents are the key people in teaching their children about sex, relationships and growing up
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and we aim to work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers

2. Statutory requirements

As a secondary independent 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 Brunel College we teach RSE as set out in this policy.

This policy has due regard to the statutory guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' (DFE, 2019) issued under section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 34 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The school also complies with the Equality Act 2010 and Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) guidance.

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 – a member of staff or working group 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 invited to attend a meeting about the policy
4. Pupil consultation – we investigated what exactly pupils want 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

Our curriculum is set out in the Curriculum Journey for PSHE/RSE and the Curriculum Steps for PSHE/RSE but we may need to adapt it as and when necessary.

We have developed the curriculum in consultation with parents, pupils and staff, taking into account 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.

The curriculum is organised around a progressive model of learning from Year 9 to Year 11 and includes explicit teaching on:

- consent and healthy relationships
- sexual health
- contraception
- image-based abuse
- online safety
- pornography literacy
- violence against women and girls
- healthy masculinity
- misogyny
- exploitation

- gangs and county lines
- safeguarding
- digital resilience
- AI and deepfake technologies

Content is revisited at increasing levels of complexity to support long-term retention and application of learning.

6. Delivery of RSE

RSE teaching reflects current safeguarding priorities and emerging risks affecting young people. These include online exploitation, image-based abuse, sexual harassment, violence against women and girls, misogyny, harmful influencer culture, radicalisation, coercive behaviour and technology-assisted abuse. Teaching is evidence-informed, age appropriate and responsive to identified pupil need and safeguarding trends. [\[RSE Policy 25 | PDF\]](#), [\[Curriculum...RSHE 26-27 | Word\]](#), [\[Curriculum...2026-2027 | Word\]](#), [\[Curriculum...2026-2027 | Word\]](#)

Brunel College acknowledges that age-appropriate teaching can help pupils prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life as well as promoting the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils both at school and in society.

RSE will be set in the context of a wider whole-school approach to supporting pupils to be safe, happy and prepared for life beyond school. The curriculum on relationships and sex will complement and be supported by, the school's wider policies on Equality and Diversity, safeguarding, SEND provision, Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Education. RSE is delivered in a trauma informed and sensitive manner, recognising that some pupils may have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACES), abuse or neglect.

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established which prohibit inappropriate personal information being requested or disclosed by those taking part in the lesson. When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the sessions. When it is felt that answering a specific question would involve information at a level inappropriate to the development of the rest of the students, the question may be dealt with individually at another time. Should pupils have a question they don't feel able to ask in the lesson, the school will have a 'PSHE question box' for pupils to submit their question to the PSHE lead who will then address the matter.

The curriculum has been planned and designed using a variety of different sources, such as the Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health education¹, PSHE Association: Programme of study for PSHE Education¹ and ECPublishing Resources².

Pupils may also receive stand-alone sex education sessions delivered by a trained health professional.

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

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

¹ <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/programme-study-pshe-education-keystages-1%E2%80%935>

² https://www.tes.com/teaching-resources/shop/EC_Resources

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, LGBTQ+ 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).

Inclusion

Brunel college is committed to ensuring that all pupils can access an inclusive RSHE curriculum.

Teaching will:

- reflect protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010
- be accessible for pupils with SEND and SEMH needs
- challenge prejudice, discrimination and bullying
- recognise a range of family structures and relationships
- promote dignity, respect and equality for all

Teaching will be adapted where appropriate to ensure all pupils can access learning safely and meaningfully.

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular content in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns and action these where possible.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We will ensure that all young people receive RSE and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary.

As far as is appropriate, young people with SEND follow the same RSE programme as all other students. Careful consideration is given concerning the level of differentiation needed and in some cases the content or delivery will be adapted. Learning support assistants work with individual pupils where required, sometimes on a one-to-one basis. Where a student has significant gaps in learning, or missed education, the PSHE Lead may deliver 1:1 RSE lessons with the student to address those gaps and provide tailored sessions.

Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation

Brunel college teaches about relationships, families, sexual orientation and protected characteristics in a factual, age-appropriate and inclusive manner consistent with the Equality Act 2010.

Teaching does not seek to persuade pupils towards any particular belief, viewpoint, identity or lifestyle. Rather, it aims to ensure that all pupils understand the law, respect the rights and dignity of others, challenge prejudice and discrimination, and develop the knowledge needed to build safe, healthy and respectful relationships.

Pupils will learn that people may have different experiences, beliefs, backgrounds and family structures. Teaching will reflect the diversity of modern British society while recognising the importance of respectful discussion and difference of opinion.

The school will create an environment in which all pupils feel safe, valued and able to access support where needed, including pupils who may be questioning aspects of their identity or experiencing discrimination, bullying or harassment.

Working with external agencies

Whenever possible it is hoped to involve visitors and other outside agencies to help and support RSE provision within the school. This can be as part of the planning process as well as with the delivery of RSE. When visitors are used this is to compliment the RSE Programme, they will never be used to substitute or replace planned provision. When visitors and

other outside agencies help and support in the delivery of RSE, there will always be a member of staff present during the lesson and the content will always be looked at prior to the lesson taking place.

The school will also ensure that the visitor is aware of aspects of confidentiality and understands how safeguarding reports should be dealt with in line with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

Safeguarding and confidentiality

Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Staff are not legally bound to inform parents and carers or headteacher of any disclosure, however any necessary information will be passed to the schools designated safeguarding officer. In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the member of staff will ensure that the young person understands that if confidentiality has to be broken, they will be informed first.

Health professionals in school are bound by their codes of conduct in a one-to-one situation with an individual pupil, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

Through the school nurse and other key members of staff (including the PSHE co-ordinator), pupils are signposted towards confidential sources of support for relationships and sexual health issues in their area.

Pupils are taught how to access support and report concerns through:

- trusted adults
- school safeguarding staff
- children's social care
- police
- CEOP
- NHS services
- specialist local and national support organisations

Pupils are regularly reminded of safeguarding pathways throughout the RSHE curriculum.

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG)

In line with national safeguarding priorities, the school teaches pupils to recognise and challenge behaviours that contribute to violence against women and girls.

Teaching includes:

- consent and healthy boundaries
- sexual harassment
- coercive control
- misogyny
- gender stereotypes
- victim blaming
- healthy masculinity
- image-based abuse

- online exploitation
- bystander intervention
- accessing help and reporting concerns

This learning is delivered through the wider RSHE, PSHE and safeguarding curriculum and is reinforced through whole-school safeguarding practice.

Artificial Intelligence and Emerging Online Risks

The college recognises that technology continues to evolve rapidly and that young people require the knowledge and skills to navigate online environments safely.

Teaching may include:

- artificial intelligence (AI)
- deepfakes
- synthetic media
- misinformation and disinformation
- algorithms and online influence
- online scams and fraud
- sextortion
- image-based abuse
- AI-generated intimate images
- online radicalisation and extremist content

Pupils will learn how to critically evaluate online information, identify manipulation, report concerns and access appropriate support services.

7. Roles and responsibilities

The board of trustees

- Ensure the RSE policy is fit for purpose and fulfils its legal obligation
- Ensure parents and carers have had a consultation period before the implementation of the policy **The Headteacher**
- Monitor the implementation of the policy
- Ensure all staff are informed of the policy and the responsibilities they have
- Ensure staff have time to receive up to date training
- Work with parents and carers to keep them informed of the curriculum and ensure all information is clear, including to those who wish for their child to be withdrawn.

PSHE lead

- Monitor the implementation of the policy and delivery of content with the headteacher
- Ensure Continued Profession Development (CPD) opportunities are provided for staff, specifically those who are delivering RSE.
- Monitor and evaluate the quality of the curriculum in place to all pupils
- Liaise with the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to ensure the curriculum is most relevant to our pupils **Staff**
- Ensure the classroom is a safe place with established ground rules prior to delivering the content

- Ensure they are aware of the, up to date, statutory requirements and policy
- Ensure resources are appropriate for those pupils they are teaching
- Emphasise the importance of RSE in relation to making informed choices
- Ensure all teaching is unbiased
- Where appropriate they direct pupils to seek advice from an appropriate agency or individual

Parents and Carers

The school recognises the key role that parents and carers play in the development of their children's understanding about relationships. Parents are the first educators of their children as you have the most significant influence in enabling their child to grow and mature, forming healthy relationships.

Students

Students are expected to engage fully in RSE and, when discussing issues related to RSE, treat others with respect and sensitivity. Students will be reminded to abide by the classroom rules and any subject specific ground rules for sensitive topics.

8. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents and carers have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE (they cannot be withdrawn from relationship education). The school, before granting any such request, will require the Headteacher to discuss the request with the parents and carers. This is to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum at which point parents and carers are welcome to review any RSE resources the academy uses. If you wish to withdraw your child from sex education, then a letter or email must be sent to Mr Craig Noble (Headteacher).

Following the discussions, except in exceptional circumstances, the Trust will respect the parents' and carers' request to withdraw their child, up to and until three terms before the child turns 16. After that point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The Headteacher and PSHE lead will ensure that where a pupil is excused from sex education, the pupil will receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.

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 pupil's educational record. The headteacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

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

9. Training

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

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.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The RSE curriculum will be reviewed annually by the PSHE Lead and Senior Leadership Team.

Evaluation will include:

Pupil voice surveys

Staff feedback

Safeguarding data analysis

Parental consultation

Curriculum audits against statutory guidance

Findings will inform curriculum updates and staff CPD.

TOPIC	PUPILS 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 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	• 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	• Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online • Pupils will be taught about the risks associated with online activity, including exposure to harmful content, online exploitation, misogyny, and the legal and emotional consequences of sharing explicit images. • 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	• 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) • what sexual harassment is • that sexual harassment is never acceptable • how to challenge harmful behaviour safely • how to report concerns involving peers or adults • how to access support following harassment or abuse •

TOPIC	PUPILS SHOULD KNOW
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, 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 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	