

## **Biddenham International School & Sports College**

### **RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY (subject to ratification)**

#### **What is Relationships and Sex Education?**

This is statutory guidance from the Department for Education issued under Section 80A of the Education Act 2002 and section 403 of the Education Act 1996.

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, make Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all students receiving secondary education. They also make Health Education compulsory in all schools, this is covered in our Health and Wellbeing Policy.

This policy also sets out both the rights of parents/carers to excuse students from sex education (but not Relationships or Health Education) and the process that the Head of School should follow in considering a request from a parent. Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

The government guidance replaces the Sex and Relationship Education guidance (2000). First required teaching is September 2020 and we will review this policy every three years in line with the government updates.

Guidance taken from [DfE July 2020, Secretary of State foreword](#);

“Today’s children and young people are growing up in an increasingly complex world and living their lives seamlessly on and offline. This presents many positive and exciting opportunities, but also challenges and risks. In this environment, children and young people need to know how to be safe and healthy, and how to manage their academic, personal and social lives in a positive way.

This is why we have made Relationships Education compulsory in all primary schools in England and Relationships and Sex Education compulsory in all secondary schools, as well as making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools.”

Biddenham is guided by the DfE principle that “all of the compulsory subject content must be age appropriate and developmentally appropriate. It must be taught sensitively and inclusively, with respect to the backgrounds and beliefs of students and parents while always with the aim of providing students with the knowledge they need of the law.”

At Biddenham, “We are clear that parents and carers are the prime educators for children on many of these matters.... This should be complemented by development of personal attributes including kindness, integrity, generosity and honesty.”

#### **Principles and values**

Biddenham International School and Sports College believes that RSE should:

- Be an integral part of the lifelong learning process, beginning in early childhood and continue into adult life.
- Enable students to embrace the challenges of creating a happy and successful adult life, with the knowledge of how to make informed decisions about their wellbeing, health and relationships and to build their self-efficacy.

- Develop students' capacity to make sound decisions when facing risks, challenges and complex contexts.
- Be delivered in an age appropriate manner.
- Promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of students, at school and in society.
- Be an entitlement for all young people.
- Be set within a wider school context and encourage students 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, affection, knowledge, tolerance and care for each other.
- Generate an atmosphere where questions and discussion on relationships and sexual matters can take place without any stigma or embarrassment.
- Recognise that parents/carers are the key people in teaching their children about relationships, sex and growing up. Work in partnership with parents/carers and students, consulting them about the content of programmes.
- Recognise that the wider community has much to offer and work in partnership with health professionals, social workers, peer educators and other mentors or advisers.

## **Aims**

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships. It should enable them to know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship. It should also cover contraception, developing intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure). It should teach what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships. This will help students 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.

Biddenhams relationships and sex education programme should:

- Follows the DfE Guidance in conjunction with the PSHE Association programme of study.
- Adopt a variety of teaching and learning styles in its delivery that does not only rely on formal taught RSE lessons, but weaves RSE curriculum through age appropriate content throughout our curriculum. Making RSE a key element of curriculum planning across all key stages.
- Recognises the developing needs of our students and is appropriate to their age and ability.
- Contributes to the promotion of the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of our students.
- Affirms everyone's right not to be sexually active.
- Provides information, presented in an objective and balanced way, about human reproduction, gender, identity, sexuality and the law, relationships and parenting.
- Encourages young people to accept moral responsibility in sexual matters.
- Acknowledges that the prime responsibility for bringing up children rests with parents/carers - therefore offer teaching that is complementary and supportive to the role of parents/carers and has regard to parents'/carers' rights and views about its content and presentation.

## **Student Outcomes**

Following the programme of relationships and sex education should enable our students to:

- Recognise the physical, emotional and moral implications and risks of certain types of behaviour
- To develop an understanding of what a healthy relationship looks like.
- Prepare for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

- Prepare to understand the range of sexual attitudes and behaviour in contemporary society and to explore their own attitudes and values.
- Fosters self-esteem, self-awareness and addresses the personal/social skills required in a variety of personal relationships (platonic, intimate, non intimate, romantic).
- Understand aspects of British legislation relating to sexual behaviour.
- Understand the importance of giving and receiving consent and the forms that consent may take when engaging in any sexual activity.
- Understand that consent can be withdrawn at any point in time before and during sexual activity and the responsibilities to respect other people's decisions in relation to consensual sexual activity.
- Consider the advantages and disadvantages of various methods of family planning in terms of personal preference and social, including religious/moral implications.
- Recognise and be able to discuss sensitive and controversial issues and be able to discuss moral values and explore those held by different cultures and groups.
- Be aware of the availability of statutory and voluntary organisations which offer support in relationships.
- Understand the changing nature, historically, of gender over time and its impact on lifestyles.
- Understanding that sexuality can evolve and change over time.
- Understand that the roles of different members of a student's family may alter over time.
- Be aware that feeling positive about sexuality and sexual activity is an important part of adult life.
- Know how gender stereotyping can be harmful and affect behaviour (this is also included in other aspects of PSHE, so relationships in the workplace through Careers).
- Know about factors which influence the process of making decisions and long/short term consequences for self and others.
- Accept responsibility for and be able to justify personal choices and decisions.
- Show some insight into other people's lifestyles.
- Be aware of the influence of the media on self-image.
- Be able to understand and manage change in relationships.
- Be able to express feelings confidently.
- Be aware of partnerships, marriage and divorce and the impact of loss, separation, and bereavement.

Aspects now included in Health and Wellbeing and are no longer part of RSE:

- Reflect upon the physical and emotional changes that take place during puberty.
- Understand the biological aspects of reproduction.
- Be aware of the need for preventative health care and know what this involves.

## **Inclusion**

We need to provide Relationships and Sex Education, according to the [Equality Act 2010](#):

- *Ethnic and Cultural Groups*: We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. We will respond to parents/carers requests and concerns.
- *Students with Special Needs*: We will ensure that all young people receive relationships and sex education, and we will offer provision appropriate to the particular needs of all our students, taking specialist advice where necessary (Appendix A).
- *Sexual Identity and Sexual Orientation*: We aim to deal sensitively and honestly with issues of

sexual orientation, answer appropriate questions and offer support. Young people, whatever their developing sexuality, need to feel that relationships and sex education is relevant to them.

For further information on inclusion in the RSE curriculum please see Appendix A.

## **Explanation of the Right to be Excused From Sex Education**

Parents have the right to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE.

Any such request should be made in writing to the Head of School. For further information on the right of withdrawal see [Appendix B](#).

## **Confidentiality, Controversial and Sensitive Issues**

### Confidentiality:

Confidentiality is addressed in our [Safeguarding Policy](#). Teachers cannot offer unconditional confidentiality. Teachers are not legally bound to inform parents/carers or the Principal of any disclosure unless the Principal has specifically requested them to do so.

In a case where a teacher learns from an under 16 year old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse:

- The young person will be persuaded, wherever possible, to talk to their parent/carer and if necessary to seek medical advice.
- Child protection issues will be considered, and referred if necessary to the teacher responsible for Child Protection under the school's procedures.
- The young person will be properly counselled about contraception, including precise information about where young people can access contraception and advice services.

In any case where child protection procedures are followed, the teacher 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 student, but in a classroom situation they must follow the school's confidentiality policy.

### Controversial and Sensitive Issues:

Any RSE lesson may consider questions or issues that some students will find sensitive. Before embarking on these lessons ground rules are established.

The following are protocols for discussion-based lessons with students:

- A gender neutral approach is adopted and encouraged by staff and students; this encourages language which does not assume a particular sexual orientation or preference. For example, the term 'partner' is used.
- No one (teacher or student) will have to answer a personal question.
- No one will be forced to take part in a discussion.
- Only the correct names for body parts will be used, although language will be explored during lessons at KS4 and 5, which generate discussion around derogatory sexual terminology and reducing/eliminating the need for this in our vocabulary.
- Meanings of words will be explained in a sensible and factual way.
- Teachers may use their discretion in responding to questions and may say that the

appropriate person to answer that question is the parent/carer.

When students ask questions, we aim to answer them honestly, within the ground rules established at the start of the lessons. 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.

Tutors will be given training to support their delivery of the RSE curriculum and any new staff (and existing staff) joining this team will be offered support as required. The RSE Co-ordinator will be available during these lessons, to support as requested.

Where a member of staff is concerned that a child protection issue is arising it is their responsibility to follow the School's policy in this matter to the letter.

## **Themes Covered Through RSE**

See [Appendix C](#)

### **Monitoring and Evaluation of Relationships and Sex Education**

It is the responsibility of the Relationships and Sex Education Co-ordinator (RSE) to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of RSE, in the context of the overall School plans for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning.

### **Visitors Contributing to RSE**

From time to time as part of our planned RSE programme, the School will invite in local experts on issues relating to RSE as well as using health and other professionals associated with the School. These usually take place in assembly, but can also take place through our Health and Wellbeing team.

All school associate health, other professionals and visitors will be asked to conform to the following:

- Visitors contributing to RSE will do so at the invitation of the School and will be qualified to make an appropriate contribution.
- Visitors must agree with the aims of the School in delivering its policy on RSE.
- When in class, visitors will be supervised by a teacher, who will be present at all times.
- Visitors will follow the School's child protection procedures if a disclosure occurs within the classroom setting.
- Visitors will know and understand where their contribution fits into the School's programme for RSE and PSHE.

### **Services to Young People Provided by the School**

The School provides services for its young people. These services are provided by health and other professionals attached to the School. The Sanctuary provides a drop-in clinic for students.

The above services are advertised throughout the School and parents/carers may also contact these services by making an appointment with the School nurse or counsellor. It is clear from Government guidelines that when not in a classroom context these professionals are covered by their own professional codes of conduct. For further information please see the mental health and wellbeing policy.

Outside the teaching situation, health professionals can:

- Give one-to-one advice or information to a student on a health-related matter including contraception; and
- Exercise their own professional judgement as to whether a young person has the maturity to

consent to medical treatment including contraceptive treatment.

### **Who Approves the Policy?**

Senior Leadership Team, then the Policy goes to Curriculum Governors for ratification and Full Governing Body to final approval.

**Date of Next Review: February 2025**

## **Appendix A**

### **Organisation and Content of Relationships and Sex Education - accessible to all students, including those with SEND**

- High quality teaching that is differentiated and personalised will be the starting point to ensure accessibility.
- Use the [DfE SEND Code of Practice\(2015\)](#) preparing for adulthood outcomes, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and delivered with reference to the law.
- Learning support lessons - key aspects of learning are taught at a pace appropriate to students' understanding.
- Additional information about support for more vulnerable students is shared with parents/carers and the student. (see the rest in appendices)

### **Requirements on Schools in Law**

In teaching Relationships Education and RSE, we will ensure that the needs of all students are appropriately met, and that all students understand the importance of equality and respect. Biddenham will ensure compliance with the relevant provisions of the [Equality Act 2010](#), (please see The Equality Act 2010 and schools: Departmental advice), under which sexual orientation and gender reassignment are amongst the protected characteristics.

As part of the DfE statutory guidance all schools are required to comply with relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010, paying particular attention to the Public sector equality duty (PSED) (s.149 of the Equality Act). 28. Under the provisions of the Equality Act, schools must not unlawfully discriminate against students because of their age, sex, race, disability, religion or belief, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, or sexual orientation (collectively known as the protected characteristics). Schools must also make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantage and be mindful of the SEND Code of Practice when planning for these subjects.

Provisions within the Equality Act allow schools to take positive action, where it can be shown that it is proportionate, to deal with particular disadvantages affecting one group because of a protected characteristic. This should be taken into consideration in designing and teaching these subjects. A school, could, for example, consider taking positive action to support girls if there was evidence that they were being disproportionately subjected to sexual violence or sexual harassment.

At Biddenham, when planning RSE and implementing this policy we have taken into consideration the makeup of our student body, including the gender and age range of their students, and consider whether it is appropriate or necessary to put in place additional support for students with particular protected characteristics (which mean that they are potentially at greater risk).

To promote greater inclusivity as part of our students' development we will also consider what can be done to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between boys and girls, and provide an environment, which challenges perceived limits on students based on their gender or any other characteristic, including through these subjects and as part of a whole-school approach.

As part of this at Biddenham we will act on issues such as everyday sexism, misogyny, transphobia, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture where these are not tolerated, and any occurrences are identified and tackled (see behaviour policy). Staff have an important role to play in modelling positive behaviours. School pastoral and behaviour policies should support all students.

Biddenham will ensure that all of the RSE teaching is sensitive and age appropriate in approach and content. At the point at which we consider it appropriate to teach their students about LGBT, we will ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a standalone unit or lesson. The DfE says that "[s]chools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all students to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum."

With regards to sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges we will defer to the DfE's advice. "The advice sets out what sexual violence and sexual harassment are, the current evidence on their preponderance in schools and colleges, how to minimise the risk of them occurring and what to do when they do occur or are alleged to have occurred. Schools should be aware of the importance of making clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable, will never be tolerated and are not an inevitable part of growing up. Any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment should be taken seriously; staff should be aware that statistically it is more likely that females will be the victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment than males, and that it is more likely that it will be perpetrated by males. However, males can also be the victims of sexual violence and it can also happen in same-sex relationships. It is, however, essential that assumptions are not made about the behaviour of boys and young men and that they are not made to feel that this behaviour is an inevitable part of being male; most young men are respectful of young women and each other. An understanding for all students of healthy relationships, acceptable behaviour and the right of everyone to equal treatment will help ensure that students treat each other well and go on to be respectful and kind adults."

## **Appendix B**

### **Further Information on the Right of Withdrawal Process**

The Head of School will request a meeting with the parents and, as appropriate, with the child, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. The Head of School will discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child. This could include any social and emotional effects of being excluded, as well as the likelihood of the child hearing their peers' version of what was said in the classes, rather than what was directly said by the teacher (although the detrimental effects may be mitigated if the parents propose to deliver sex education to their child at home instead).

Once those discussions have taken place, except in exceptional circumstances, the school will respect the parents' request to withdraw the 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, we will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms.

The schools will document this process to ensure a record is kept.

Any student who is granted the right to be excused from sex education, will attend the library during the session time and can work on their online literacy or numeracy programmes under supervision. There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education or Health Education. Students will be expected to be in PSHE sessions for all of these other topics.

## Appendix C

### Organisation and Content of Relationships and Sex Education

This policy has been produced according to DfE guidance, with information taken directly from the [‘Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education’](#).

The curriculum programme has been developed with input from;

- Student voice - initial student voice to develop a scheme which was relevant and engaged the students and continued involvement through surveys taken at different points in their progression through school using Google Forms.
- Student forum - feedback from year groups through student forum
- Curriculum governors - both through meetings and governor observations taking place of the programme in action
- Curriculum and Achievement Group - oversight of the placing of RSE within the wider school curriculum
- Independent PSHCE businesses - this may take the form of visits or provided materials
- Local Authority
- PSHCE Association - membership of and involvement with
- DfE representations through the early adopters - in the form of meetings with the RSE Coordinator
- RSE online network of leads and coordinators

We deliver Relationships Education as part of our PSHE programme. Relationships Education is taught for half a term a year, covering part of the curriculum.

Through English, Science, RS, PSHE sessions and tutor time we encourage balanced debate about issues that are seen as contentious as a way to help our students process their own thoughts around these issues. To ensure full coverage across each key stage. This is supplementary to and in support of the National Curriculum. During the PSHE sessions, our content follows the recommended themes from the DfE:

Core Theme 1	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> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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>
Core Theme 2	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.</li> <li>• This includes different (non-sexual) types of relationships.</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</li> </ul>

		<p>violence and why these are always unacceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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> <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>
Core Theme 3	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>•</li> </ul>
Core Theme 4	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> <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>
Core Theme 5	Intimate Sexual Relationships Including Sexual	<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,</li> </ul>

	Health	<p>shared interests and outlook, sex and friendship.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <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 and menopause.</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>● 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>
Core Theme 6	The Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● To know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues including the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology.</li> <li>● To know what is right and wrong in law with regards to sharing information about yourself and others.</li> <li>● An awareness of the legal provisions for: marriage, consent (including the age of consent), violence against women and girls, online behaviours including image and information sharing (including 'sexting', youth-produced sexual imagery, nudes,</li> </ul>

		etc), pornography, abortion, sexuality, gender identity, substance misuse, violence and exploitation by gangs, extremism/radicalisation, criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations), hate crime, female genital mutilation (FGM)
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We deliver aspects of the RSE curriculum within English, Science and RS core curriculum time, to ensure full coverage is completed over the course of each Key Stage. This is supplementary to and in support of the National Curriculum.