

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION POLICY



Next Review	January 2026
Governor Approval Committee	
Staff Role Responsible	Martyn Patching - Assistant Headteacher Personal Development

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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
- Create a positive culture around issues of sexuality and relationships
- Teach students the correct vocabulary to describe themselves and their bodies
- To promote and uphold the school P.R.I.D.E values

2. Statutory requirements

As a maintained secondary school, we must provide RSE to all pupils 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.

At Barnwell School we teach RSE as set out in this policy. Further details of the RSE curriculum content can be found in the school's Barnwell Pride Learning Journey and schemes of learning. Our approach to RSE and the development of this policy has been created in consultation with staff, students, parents and governors to ensure it meets the needs of our community.

3. Definition

RSE is about the emotional, social and cultural development of students, and involves learning about relationships, sexual health, sexuality, healthy lifestyles, diversity and personal identity. RSE involves a combination of sharing information and exploring issues and values. RSE is not about the promotion of sexual activity.

4. Delivery of RSE

RSE is mainly taught through PSHE schemes of learning within PRIDE Lessons. Biological aspects of RSE are also taught within the science curriculum, and other aspects are included in Religious Education and Citizenship.

RSE is taught both in discreet topics, but content is also covered over a range of Personal Development areas across the school which ensures a more cohesive and embedded approach to the subject. Delivery of the RSE curriculum is varied and adapted as needed for student need to ensure the content is accessible to all students, including those with SEND.

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

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.

Across all Key Stages, students will be supported in developing the following skills:

- Communication, including how to manage changing relationships and emotions.
- Recognising and assessing potential risks
- Assertiveness
- Seeking help and support when required
- Informed decision-making
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work

These skills are taught within the context of family life.

4.1 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

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 The Governing board

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

5.2 The Headteacher

The Headteacher is responsible for monitoring RSE to ensure that it is taught consistently across the school, and for managing requests to withdraw students from non-statutory components of RSE in collaboration with the named RSE lead.

5.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Delivering RSE in a sensitive way
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE
- Monitoring progress
- Responding to the needs of individual students
- Responding appropriately to students whose parents wish them to be withdrawn from the non-statutory components of RSE

An RSE specialist will be consulted to ensure staff teaching this SOL will have the necessary training.

5.4 Students

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

6. 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 pupils' experiences and won't provoke distress

7. Parental Partnership

Parents and Carers are the key people in teaching their children about sex and relationships; maintaining the culture and ethos of their family; helping children to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of growing up; and preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities that sexual maturity brings. Parents are encouraged to:

- create an open home environment where young people can engage, discuss and continue to learn about matters that been raised through Barnwell Pride activities.
- be vigilant and responsive to concerns relating to inappropriate material available or viewed online.
- seek additional support from Barnwell School where they feel it is needed.

It is intended that Barnwell School's RSE programme will complement and support the role of parents/carers.

8. Use of External Organisations and Materials

We will make sure that an 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 pupils' 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

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

9. Parents' right to withdraw

Parents have the right to withdraw their children from the non-science components of sex education within RSE up to and until 3 terms before the child turns 16. After this point, if the child wishes to receive sex education rather than being withdrawn, the school will arrange this. Parents do not hold the right to remove their children from the 'Relationships' aspect of the RSE curriculum.

The school will work actively to ensure that parents have prior understanding of the content that will be delivered in RSE rotations, giving parents the opportunity to withdraw from non-statutory elements of the curriculum.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the Head Teacher. A copy of withdrawal requests will be placed in the student's educational record. The Head Teacher will discuss the request with parents and take appropriate action.

All requests will be treated in confidence and considered carefully by the head teacher and the named RSE lead. Alternative work will be given to pupils who are withdrawn from sex education.

10. 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 head teacher 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.

11. Monitoring arrangements

The delivery of RSE is monitored by the named RSE lead (Martyn Patching) through:

- Learning walks
- Work scrutiny
- Collaborative meetings and planning sessions
- Attending relevant training
- Ensuring that the RSE team attend relevant training
- Ensuring knowledge of RSE updates and their implementation in school
- Students' development in RSE is monitored by class teachers as part of our internal assessment systems
- This policy will be reviewed by the head teacher and the governing body annually and will be approved by them in collaboration.

12. 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 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 provided RSE curriculum information and invited to provide feedback about the policy and to discuss any issues raised with Mr Patching.
4. Ratification – once amendments were made, the policy was shared with governors and ratified.