



## Bexley Grammar School

### Relationship and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

**Statement Update, incorporating recent government guidance:** *The revised statutory guidance for RSE from the department of education states that from September 2020, all secondary schools must deliver relationships and sex education. This is due to the curriculum becoming increasingly outdated: it had failed to address risks to children, which have become more prevalent in recent years, including online pornography and sexting, and had insufficiently reinforced staying safe online. As a result, in March 2017, the government made amendments to the Children and Social Work Bill making it a requirement that all secondary schools in England teach relationships and sex education (RSE). The amendment also required personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) to be taught in all schools. The government has renamed Sex and Relationship Education: its new title, 'Relationships and Sex Education', seeks to emphasise the central importance of healthy relationships.*

#### **Rationale:**

BGS understands its duty (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). At BGS, we feel appropriate and responsible delivery of RSE is an important element in educating pupils in preparing them for adult life. It necessarily calls for sensitive and careful treatment; our increased guidance on topics for the 21st century provides advice on new challenges such as online pornography, and online safety (which can be seen in more depth in our Online Safety policy). This advice has been developed with the charitable bodies [Brook](#) and [Sex Education Forum](#), and has been welcomed by the DfE, and a number of prominent organisations.

RSE and PSHCE teaches 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. It should also include clear, impartial scientific information on matters such as the changes of puberty, abortion and assisted conception, as well as covering the law in relation to, for example, forced-marriage and female genital mutilation (FGM). It should also cover the concept of equality - between genders, ages, classes, ethnicities etc - and all legislation relating to it.

Schools have specific responsibilities in relation to equality and protected characteristics. It is important that RSE fosters gender and LGBT+ equality, challenging all forms of discrimination and bullying. It must be respectful of how pupils choose to identify themselves, understanding that their sexual orientation and gender identity may be 'emerging'. It must also set out how the school's RSE meets the needs of all pupils, with their diverse experiences, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## **The Place of Sex Education within the School Curriculum**

At BGS, we aim to raise the awareness of students about their bodies and emotions, and about those of others; also, we aim to foster an understanding of different personal relationships and how these have developed through the ages, as well as enabling students to understand the dangers of exploitation and ways of preventing, and dealing with this threat.

For some years now, we have worked on giving students the self-confidence they need to relate to others, and this is something we will continue to develop, whilst also looking at ways to encourage students to be responsible for their own sexuality. Students currently (and will continue to) learn about reproduction in Science lessons as part of the Science curriculum; we support this by providing students with information about different forms of contraception. This links closely to information we provide about sexually transmitted diseases, HIV, Aids and safe sex, where we work closely with The Children's Bureau and Bexley Council. This in turn will help young people to understand the range of sexual attitudes and behaviours in present day society, to know what is and is not legal, to consider their own attitudes and to make informed, reasoned and responsible decisions about the attitudes they will adopt both while they are at school and in adulthood. They will be made aware of religious and cultural values and of the difference between fact and opinion.

Teaching about the physical aspects of sexual behaviour should be set within a clear moral framework in which pupils are encouraged to consider the importance of self-restraint, including teaching that focuses on addressing issues related to consent, sexual harassment and sexual violence, dignity and respect for themselves and others, and helped to recognise the physical, emotional and moral risks of casual and promiscuous sexual behaviour. The school shall foster a recognition that both sexes should behave responsibly in these matters. Pupils should be helped to appreciate the benefits of stable married and family life and the responsibilities of parenthood and to recognise sexual activity as a part of a stable, long-term loving relationship.

Schools have a responsibility to ensure that pupils understand those aspects of the law which relate to sexual activity. A teacher approached by a pupil for advice on these or other aspects of sexual behaviour should encourage the pupil to seek advice from his or her parents/ guardians and the appropriate locations signposted for support. Where the circumstances are such as to lead the teacher to believe that the pupil has embarked upon, or is contemplating, a course of conduct which is likely to place him or her in moral or physical danger, or in breach of the law, the teacher has a general duty to warn the pupil of the risks involved.

Particular care and sensitivity is needed in matching teaching and learning to the maturity of the pupils involved, which may not always be adequately indicated by chronological age. RSE Education will take place within the timetable, but is commonly subsumed within a broader programme of PSHCE. Whilst the physical aspects of sexual development and behaviour will be partly encompassed within the teaching of Biology, opportunities for considering the broader emotional and ethical dimensions of sexual attitudes and mores may arise in other subject areas across the curriculum. Staff who teach RSE are expected to: provide RSE education in accordance with this policy and in a way which encourages students to consider morals and the value of family life; and they are required to participate in training to provide sex education in line with the school curriculum policy. We implement the agreed scheme of work in PSHCE sessions and on

Power days (collapsed timetable days when the whole school focuses on PSHCE, careers, cross-curricular and specific RSE topics to supplement the main curriculum), all with the aim of making our students feel safe and informed on RSE matters.

### **Delivery of RSE:**

At Bexley Grammar School, RSE delivery is through planned aspects within the core areas of Science, Religious Studies, Politics and Physical Education curricula, as well as through Careers advice and guidance. Additionally, other areas are covered through PSHCE sessions, assemblies and through Power Days, where we address moral and ethical issues which may arise from (apparently) unrelated topics in all National Curriculum subjects. In these categories, as long as any discussion takes place within the context of the subject, it is not deemed to be part of the RSE programme and therefore not subject to the parental right of withdrawal. The Head of PSHCE is responsible for the overall planning, implementation and review of the whole programme. Subject Leaders and senior academic mentors (SAMs) are responsible for discussing programmes of study with their departments and Head of PSHCE. The Head of PSHCE will provide a report to the Governors on the implementation of the scheme of work each year and on the teaching and impact of lessons on students.

### **Timetabled lessons**

All students have one 20-minute lesson per week during academic monitoring.

### **Power Day sessions**

All students have some sessions run by outside consultants over the course of a year. There are five whole-day events where we cover topics linked to the PSHCE planned content for that term, or relevant topics that need, in our view, to be covered at that particular time.

### **Form Tutor time**

Academic monitoring sessions are used to deliver PSHCE and also to allow tutors and students to discuss issues that may arise .

### **Assemblies**

Weekly assemblies are used to support the programme of lessons. There are PSHCE focuses on a termly basis.

### **Cross-Curricular approach to skills:**

All teachers develop relevant skills such as team working, communication and presentation skills in our students during normal timetabled lessons; staff are positively encouraged to explore links between subject content and RSE-related issues.

### **Assessment and monitoring:**

PSHCE assessment includes formative and summative assessment, using assessment for learning techniques in lessons, as well as students producing work on Power Days that they present, discuss and collect in their PSHCE files. This may also include: verbal feedback, review sheets, presentations and written tasks.

The curriculum is altered and refined in response to: regular student feedback on specific areas via surveys and meetings with the head of PSHCE; social, political and legal changes; termly meetings

of the Head of PSHCE with other secondary schools in SELSA (South East London Schools Alliance) to discuss best practice.

### **The right of Parents to withdraw their child from aspects of RSE:**

Should parents/guardians wish to withdraw their child from the few non-compulsory areas of RSE education within the school, they will participate in the following procedure:

Before granting the request, the Head Teacher will:

- o Discuss the request with parents and, as appropriate, with the child, to ensure that their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, whilst making them aware of the topics that are compulsory;
- o Discuss with parents the benefits of receiving this important education and any detrimental effects that withdrawal might have on the child;
- o Document this process to ensure a record is kept. To comply with GDPR the record will be destroyed once the child reaches the age of consent (i.e.16), or leaves the school, whichever is sooner.

Once these 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, the school will make arrangements to provide the child with sex education during one of those terms. Once a child has been withdrawn, he or she cannot take part in later RSE without parental approval.

In fact, very few parents exercise this right, and parents wishing to exercise it are able to preview the materials before making a final decision, although they are under no obligation to do so.

Parents/Guardians are key figures in helping their children to cope with the physical and emotional aspects of growing up and in preparing them for the challenges and responsibilities which sexual maturity brings. The teaching offered by BGS should be complementary to, and supportive of, the role of parents/guardians and should be carried out in consultation with them.

**Related documents:** E-Safety policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Policy, Curriculum policy, Equal Opportunities policy, Health and Safety Statement of Intent, Privacy Notice for Pupils, and SEND policy.

Further details, including schemes of work and teaching topics, can be found on the school's website via the link below [Bexley Grammar School - PSHCE \(bexleygs.co.uk\)](http://Bexley Grammar School - PSHCE (bexleygs.co.uk))