

## Bedford College Academies Academy

### Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) Policy

<b>Status:</b> Statutory	<b>Member of staff responsible:</b> Principal, Wixams Academy	<b>Implementation date:</b> December 2023
<b>Issue No:</b> 1	<b>Approved by:</b> Wixams Academy Advisory Body (LAB)	<b>Next Review Date:</b> October 2024

#### Our Vision

“The BCAT vision is to support students to achieve their absolute best whatever their ability or background. We aim to:

1. Work collaboratively to deliver an inclusive and outstanding education to all students, thereby driving up local standards.
2. Maximise social mobility and life chances, through the highest expectations of and aspirations for all students.
3. Encourage and support a range of high performing and distinctive educational establishments for local communities.”

#### Our Values

**Student focus** - We will seek to achieve a high quality learning experience for every student

**High performance** - We will strive for consistently high levels of performance in all aspects of our work

**Respect, openness and honesty** - We will treat everyone with respect, encourage openness and honesty, and recognise each other’s contribution and achievements.

#### 1. Aims:

This policy is to set out Wixams Academy’s approach to teaching Relationships and Sex Education (SRE) through PSHE and Personal Development. From September 2020 the Government renamed Sex and Relationships Education- Relationships and Sex Education. RSE is used in this policy as an abbreviation of the new name from September 2020. It is important to note that the new statutory framework also includes health education, but ‘health education’ is not currently covered in this policy. The new statutory guidance which is implemented as of September 2020 as stated by the Department for Education can be found here: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/805781/Relationships Education Relationships and Sex Education RSE and Health Education.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/805781/Relationships_Education_Relationships_and_Sex_Education_RSE_and_Health_Education.pdf)

#### 2. Ethos:

At Wixams Academy we believe that our high quality Relationships and Sex Education will stay with our pupils for life. It is taught through our PSHCE (personal, social, health, citizenship and economic education) and Personal Development (PSHCE and Religious Studies combined) programmes through

every year group. RSE is **not** about encouraging teenagers to become sexually active nor is it about promoting any particular lifestyle or relationship choice. RSE is about providing pupils with the knowledge, skills and confidence to make safe, healthy and informed relationship choices as young people and in the future as adults. We, at Wixams Academy, feel we have a duty to prepare our students for the wider world and ensuring they have the information to keep safe and make informed choices. Our school values underpin everything we do in PSHCE, particularly helping students learn to respect themselves and those around them. Therefore, RSE at Wixams Academy is about empowering our pupils to understand their bodies, to reflect on their relationship values and to be able to openly discuss relationships and sex. We believe this approach will not only reduce the risk of unhealthy and abusive relationships but also help students understand the people around them. The theme of consent underpins all of our RSE workshops and modules. We introduce pupils to the importance of consent from Year 7 and this is revisited on a yearly basis and adapted to the age of each year group.

### **Objectives:**

At Wixams Academy our Relationships and Sex Education Programme seeks to:

- Be age appropriate and differentiated to the needs of the pupils including SEND and any other disabilities that require a bespoke curriculum.
- Present information in an objective, balanced and sensitive manner
- Encourage the development of social skills and strategies, which will reduce the risk of exploitation, misunderstanding and abuse.
- Prepare pupils for the journey from **adolescence to adulthood**
- Ensure pupils can identify the qualities of **healthy and unhealthy relationships**
- Make pupils aware how and where to **seek help** if they are in an unhealthy or abusive relationship
- Develop a clear understanding of the importance of **consent**; how to give, withdraw, ask for and recognise consent
- Reinforce the importance of **loving relationships**, rooted in **mutual respect**
- Explore the skills needed for **effective parenting** and how to assess one's readiness to be a parent
- Ensure pupils understand the different risks associated with various types of sexual activity and understand how to engage **in safe sexual activity** by exploring a range of **contraception**. Allow pupils to examine the physical and emotional implications of sexual behaviour and to explore the arguments for **delaying sexual activity**
- Ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of **sexual and reproductive biology**, including knowledge of HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases
- Develop pupils' understanding of the dangers of pornographic material
- To represent all types of families and to explore the different methods for starting a family
- To ensure that all people from protected characteristics such as different ethnicities, LGBT and people with disabilities are positively represented in our curriculum
- Be fully **inclusive of all genders, sexual orientations and all types of families (LGBT inclusive)**
- Provide pupils with a safe environment to learn about **sexual orientation and gender identity**, reinforcing the importance of mutual respect and tackling LGBT misconceptions, homophobia, transphobia, bi-phobia and gender stereotypes
- Place paramount importance on online safety and the risks of using social media and the internet for sexual purposes.

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities

The RSE programme will be led by the Head of PSHCE. PSHCE and therefore RSE will be taught by a small team of teachers across the school who will be supported the Head of PSHCE.

All teachers who are involved in RSE lessons will be provided with training by the Head of PSHCE to ensure students are supported in their learning. Teachers are also encouraged to go on CPD courses and to use the schools membership to the PSHE Association to aid with their own knowledge.

### 4. Legal Requirements

Under the Education Act (1993) and the Education Reform Act (1998) all schools are required to maintain a statement of Policy regarding RSE and make it available to parents on request. This policy complies with Department of Education Guidance on Sex & Relationships Education (0116/2000) and the supplementary guidance Sex & Relationships Education for the 21st Century 2014.

From September 2020 the guidance document '**Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers**' will become statutory. This document clearly sets out the curriculum content that secondary schools must deliver on RSE and Health Education. This document contains information on what schools should do and sets out the legal duties with which schools must comply when teaching Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education. Unless otherwise specified, 'school' means all schools, whether maintained, non-maintained or independent schools, including academies and free schools, non-maintained special schools, maintained special schools and alternative provision, including pupil referral units.

### 5. Safe and Effective Practice

At Wixams Academy, we want to ensure the safety of both pupils and staff when dealing with sensitive topics. There are a number of ways we seek to ensure this:

- 'Ask it Basket' – This is a way for students to ask anonymous questions and teachers to respond in an appropriate manor. The box will be managed by the classroom teacher and will be used at specific times in the lesson. All students will be encouraged to write a question or a '?' on to the paper with the aim of lessening embarrassment. If anything of a safeguarding nature arises, the normal safeguarding policy stands.
- Distancing Techniques – Teachers will be encouraged to use distancing techniques to allow students to explore their own understanding of topics without bias.
- During Relationships & Sex Education lessons (and at other times) controversial topics may arise. The judgement of individual teachers will decide as to whether the subjects are suitable for class discussion. Teachers will try to answer pupils' questions honestly, sensitively and in such a way that takes the context into account. In all circumstances, the professional judgement of the teacher must come in to play.
- Support – Teachers will be supported by the Head of PSHCE/ SLT Link to ensure they feel prepared and equipped to deal with sensitive issues.
- Pupils will never be asked to disclose their sexual orientation or be asked personal information about themselves.

- If a question is felt to be too explicit, the teacher will acknowledge it and deal with it outside the whole class setting.
- Any concerns that arise about sexual abuse or any other safeguarding issues must be followed up under the school's safeguarding procedures

## **6. Safeguarding**

Teachers are aware that effective RSE, which brings an understanding of what is and what is not appropriate in a relationship, can lead to a disclosure of a child protection issue. Each student will be given a PSHCE Working agreement at the beginning of the year which will give the opportunity to discuss how disclosures can be given. Any safeguarding concerns will be passed straight on to one of the Designated Safeguarding leads via CPOMS and a verbal conversation.

Visitors/external agencies which support the delivery of RSE will be required to have read the policy.

## **7. Curriculum Design**

Our RSE programme is embedded into our overall PSHE Programme. This is delivered to Y7-8 in PSHE lessons, Y9-11 through Personal Development lessons and Sixth form in PSHCE lessons. RSE is interleaved throughout the year groups to ensure topics are covered in an age appropriate way and then developed over time. For example: consent is regularly discussed from year 7 to year 13 but the way it is handled is very different depending on the year group. Our RSE is inclusive of all protected characteristics in the Equality Act, Section 4 (2010). We ensure we match the needs of our students through a variety of methods such as looking at local context and student voice.

Our lessons come from a variety of sources, including but not exclusive to, PSHE Association, PSHE Association approved resources, EC resources and Wixams Academy made. Lessons will be differentiated to ensure the needs are met for all learners in the classroom. For some students this may mean an alternative support plan being put in place to ensure their understanding. Teachers and all those contributing to Relationships & Sex education will work within an agreed framework as set out in this policy.

We will also work with external specialist organisations, consultants and healthcare professionals to ensure our curriculum reflects current best practice. The school will work with health professionals in the development and implementation of the schools Relationships & Sex programme. Any visitors used to help in the delivery of the Relationships & Sex Education programme will be clear about the boundaries of their input and will be aware of the Relationships & Sex Education curriculum, relevant school policies and their work will be planned and agreed in advance.

Learning about relationships and sex education in PSHCE education lessons will link to/complement learning in a variety of subjects, for example: Religious Studies, Science, Geography and Computer Science. Where these topics are covered students will be encouraged to discuss their understanding from all subjects. Teachers of all subjects have also been provided with objectives relating to PSHCE and RSE specifically. This is to enable to consistent message to all students which is in line with Wixams Academy values.

Where a parent has concerns over RSE, there is a right to withdraw their child from Sex Education (please see Engaging Stakeholders). At Wixams Academy, there are very few lessons where sex education exclusively happens. Most lessons come under the statutory guidance as health and relationships and therefore students cannot be withdrawn from any other topics except for the 'mechanics of sexual intercourse'. This does not include lessons on contraception as this comes under the health guidance; however, students may be withdrawn from condom demonstrations.

## 8. Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

The school covers a whole range of subjects which interlink to RSE. We will develop monitoring and reporting through a variety of different ideas, such as: learning walks where teachers will be seen teaching a variety of content, PSHCE department meetings which will discuss RSE content and issues. The Head of PSHCE has an active 'action plan' which is continually developed and monitored through learning walks and observations.

Student progress is monitored through progress quizzes and conversations. Assessment of student progress will be monitored through self/ peer and teacher assessment; this follows the Feedback policy for Wixams Academy. All students will receive a mini progress quiz at the beginning of each PSHCE topic and will complete the same quiz at the end of each topic. The aim of this is to enable students to assess their own learning through progress over time and also allow teachers to assess and address any misconceptions. Students will be engaging in active learning where they will be able to feel part of the lesson and given opportunities to discuss topics in detail.

Through student and teacher voice, we will continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the RSE curriculum (see engaging stakeholders).

## 9. Engaging Stakeholders

Parental support is integral to the success of our RSE curriculum. While we have an educational and legal obligation to provide young people with Relationships & Sex Education we respect the primary role of the parents in educating their children about these matters. Parents will be informed about the course through a number of different methods: consultation evening (where appropriate), newsletters and notices.

Our RSE programme is outlined in our Parent Handbook and parents/guardians are very welcome to explore our RSE curriculum further by requesting to view the teaching materials. The policy itself will be on the school website for parents and others to access. It will also be available upon request on school site.

Under the Education Act 1993, parents have the right to withdraw their children from either part, or all, of the Sex Education provided by the school. However this does not include aspects of Sex Education covered by the Science National Curriculum. Parents with concerns or considering withdrawing their child for RSE should in the first instance contact the Head of PSHCE, Mrs N. Loynes, who will invite the parent to a meeting to discuss their concerns and reassure the parents of the health and educational benefits of RSE. In most cases this resolves any concerns, but should parents still wish to withdraw their child from Sex Education then a request should be made in writing to the Headteacher, Mr P. Spyropoulos.

As per the Department of Education guidelines<sup>1</sup>:

*"Parents will continue to have a right to request to withdraw their child from sex education delivered as part of RSE in secondary schools which, unless there are exceptional circumstances, should be granted up to three terms before their child turns 16. At this point, if the child themselves wishes to receive sex education rather than be withdrawn, the school should make arrangements for this to happen in one of the three terms before the child turns 16 - the legal age of sexual consent.*

*There is no right to withdraw from Relationships Education at primary or secondary as we believe the contents of these subjects – such as family, friendship, safety (including online safety) – are important for all children to be taught."*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education-faqs#:~:text=A%3A%20Parents%20will%20continue%20to,before%20their%20child%20turns%2016.>

Student voice will be used to review and tailor our RSE programme to match the different needs of students. Students will be asked at the end of the year about how they feel the PSHE and RSE content and if there are areas which they want more education. This will then inform the planning and curriculum design.

Governors will be informed of the RSE policy and curriculum through meetings with the Principal; where he will inform them of significant changes as well as updates on our curriculum. The policy will be reviewed yearly by the Head of PSHCE and Pastoral SLT.

Links to other policies: Safeguarding Policy, SEND policy, Equity and Diversity policy.

## **Appendix 1: Statutory Curriculum**

*Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education: statutory guidance for governing bodies, proprietors, head teachers, principals, senior leadership teams, teachers.*

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education/relationships-and-sex-education-rse-secondary>

### **Families**

Pupils should know:

- 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 – for example, 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), how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed

### **Respectful relationships, including friendships**

Pupils should know:

- the characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, in all contexts including online, such as:
  - 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 (for example, 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

### **Online and media**

Pupils should know:

- their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, including that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts, including online

- 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, for example 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**

Pupils should know:

- 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

## **Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health**

Pupils should know:

- 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, for example 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 and menopause
- 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 and 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



# The Law

It is important to know what the law says about sex, relationships and young people, as well as broader safeguarding issues. This includes a range of important facts and the rules regarding sharing personal information, pictures, videos and other material using technology. This will help young people to know what is right and wrong in law, but it can also provide a good foundation of knowledge for deeper discussion about all types of relationships. There are also many different legal provisions whose purpose is to protect young people and which ensure young people take responsibility for their actions.

Pupils should be made aware of the relevant legal provisions when relevant topics are being taught, including for example:

- 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, etc.)
- pornography
- abortion
- sexuality
- gender identity
- substance misuse
- violence and exploitation by gangs
- extremism and radicalisation
- criminal exploitation (for example, through gang involvement or 'county lines' drugs operations)
- hate crime
- female genital mutilation (FGM)