



Relationships and Sex Education Policy

Issue	By	Review
1.0	Christopher Bailey	July 2025
2.0	Alison Scotney	Feb 2025
3.0	Alison Scotney	September 2025

Contents:

Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Context of the School
3. Key roles and responsibilities
4. Aims of the RSE curriculum: Statutory guidance
5. Delivery of RSE
6. Timetabling and cross-faculty involvement
7. Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality
8. Tailoring RSE
9. Programmes of study
10. Assessment
11. Monitoring and reviewing arrangements

Statement of intent

School Vision

Together at Bestwood, we **ASPIRE** to be the best versions of ourselves that we can be.

A - Achievement

S - Safety

P - Positivity

I - Independence

R - Respectfulness

E - Enjoyment

School aims

To achieve our vision, we will ensure that together we all;

- Achieve outcomes that are to the best of our abilities.
- Keep one another safe and ensure that everyone feels looked after.
- Maintain unconditional positive regard in everything we do.
- Promote independence wherever possible.
- Be kind and respectful to one another.
- Have as much fun and enjoyment as possible.

Policy aims

We believe that a strong Relationship, Sex and Health Education (RSE) curriculum is important to help our pupils develop into well-rounded members of society, who can make a positive contribution to their community. Our RSE curriculum is synonymous with our mission statement.

Why is RSE curriculum important for our children?

The Sex Education Forum posits the question 'what is the key learning needed to ensure my pupils can be safe, healthy and enjoying fulfilling relationships?' this belief is a foundation stone for a functional, inclusive and personalised RSE curriculum; not simply for all children but for our children. The curriculum should maximise opportunities to prepare children for the future, adulthood and transition, in line with the SEN Code of Practice as well as be a tool for meeting their EHCP needs, giving them a safe space to experience change, failure and help them to find out what they like, dislike and who they are becoming.

Our children should be able to experience the real world, culture and other people and plunge into a world of awe and wonder.

Internal experiences are just as vital, pupils should be able to maximise their potential and have opportunities to succeed away from academia. In turn it is anticipated that progress can be felt by the young people; building confidence and self-esteem, raise intrinsic expectations, give children ownership

of their outcomes and progress, promote own responsibility, promote an understanding of cause and effect, promote discussion and appreciation of justice, fairness and British values.

To maximise the effectiveness of these values, which we believe are core to the RSE curriculum, this should become a whole school approach, it should involve parents, in turn raising their aspirations for their young people and the expectations of staff towards pupils' futures.

Equality and Diversity

RSE is provided to all young people and provision is made to allow all young people to access the curriculum. Young people are encouraged to follow learning and discussions which suit their interests, skills and strengths with the absence of stereotypes. All young people are provided with the same opportunities and diversity is celebrated on an individual and whole school basis. Stereotyping of any kind in RSE is addressed through the RSE programme using national strategies, for example, the promotion of underrepresented groups and challenging of rigid thinking by ASC aware staff members to the young people of Bestwood Village School and their wider support networks.

1. Legal framework

1.1. This policy has due regard to legislation and statutory guidance, including, but not limited to the following:

- Education Act 1996
- Education Act 2002
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2025) 'Keeping children safe in education' (KCSIE)
- DfE (2020) 'Relationships and sex education (RSHE) and health education'
- DfE (2025) Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (for introduction September 2026)

1.2. This policy will be followed in conjunction with the following school policies and procedures:

- SMSC policy
- Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

2.0 Context of the school

Bestwood Village School is an Educational Establishment that caters for students and young people aged from 7-16. All students attending the school have an Autism diagnosis and are working significantly below their age-related expectations. Educational, Health and Care plans are in place to inform the provision planning to ensure that students are able to progress towards and meet their highly individualised and educational goals. In addition to their autism diagnosis, many students also have additional associated diagnosis', or medical considerations, such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADHD) or Epilepsy.

Students attending Bestwood Village School are grouped into one of three different pathways, based on their needs, EHCP targets and levels of attainment. These are called the Robin, Kestrel and Eagle Pathways.

Robin is our informal pathway and allows our students to explore their sense of self. These programmes are designed to allow pupils to gain a better understanding of their individualised communication / sensory profiles, through a sensory play/ intensive interaction approach.

Our semi formal Pathway – Kestrel starts to introduce subject content linked where possible to the national curriculum, whilst still allowing pupils to gain a better understanding of their individualised communication / sensory profiles, through a sensory play/ intensive interaction approach. Students will eventually advance to qualifications in key stage 4 in this pathway including ASDAN awards /Entry levels.

Our formal pathway – Eagle, is designed for students working at a higher cognitive level, this pathway contains links to the National Curriculum. Students studying on this route will eventually advance to qualification routes in Key Stage 4 e.g. Entry levels / Functional Skills

In addition to pathways Robin, Kestrel and Eagle, all students will access an enhanced Enrichment program, where they will have access to the local community which form an integral part of their education and preparedness for adulthood. The enrichment program allows students to build on their own independence through travel training, shopping and food preparation.

A scheme of learning around Careers has also been established to support students in understanding the different roles in society and build job aspirations in those students that may go on to find employment. PSHE, RSE and RE will be delivered to students at an appropriate level to their educational needs and levels of understanding.

3.0 Key roles and responsibilities

The governing board has overall responsibility for the implementation of the school's RSE Policy.

The governing board has overall responsibility for ensuring that the RSE Policy, as written, does not discriminate on any grounds, including but not limited to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

The headteacher has overall responsibility for reviewing the RSE Policy annually.

The headteacher has responsibility for handling complaints regarding this policy, as outlined in the school's Complaints Procedures Policy.

The headteacher will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation and management of the RSE Policy.

The Personal Development Lead (SENDSCO) is responsible for liaising with other staff and professional agencies to devise a suitable scheme of work to ensure a comprehensive RSE education that achieves the aims laid out in this policy.

The school will consult with parents to ensure that the RSE and relationships education elements of the RSE curriculum reflect the needs and sensibilities of the wider school community.

Most elements within our RSE curriculum are statutory requirements under the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education statutory guidance (DfE, July 2019 and 2025), as well as the Equality Act 2010.

The school will work with parents throughout the year and will ensure that parents are routinely kept informed about the planned curriculum and their right to withdraw their children from sex education elements and when they are being taught through Half Termly Newsletters. There is no right to withdraw from relationships education or health education.

The school ensures that pupils are also involved in the creation of this policy through termly feedback, suggestion forms and/or class discussions led by the school council

4. Aims of the RSE curriculum: Statutory guidance

In Key Stage 1 and 2 we teach Relationships education, and in Key Stage 3 and 4, we teach Relationships and Sex education, with both Key Stages being taught Health Education, thus following the statutory guidance as set out by the Department of Education and the Independent School Standards. Pupils will learn to do the following:

- Understand what constitutes a healthy lifestyle; mentally and physically.
- Understand their bodies, including how they change through puberty and consent, appropriate to both their age and stage.
- Understand how to stay safe and behave online and offline.
- Develop responsibility and independence within school which they will take forward into society in their working lives.
- Respect other people, in particular, learning to respect the different cultural/ethnic/religious/gendered viewpoints of others in our school community and the wider world.
- Recognise, critically evaluate and respond to misinformation, disinformation, and conspiracy theories, particularly those encountered online, this includes teaching how to assess the reliability of sources, understand the potential harms of false narratives, and develop digital literacy and critical thinking skills in line with the latest Keeping Children Safe in Education guidance 2025.
- Understand what constitutes 'socially acceptable' behaviour at school and in society and be a constructive member of society.
- Understand democracy in a way that is appropriate to their age and stage.
- Understand what healthy and respectful relationships are, including families and friendships online and offline.
- Understand what respectful behaviour looks like.
- Develop self-confidence, self-esteem and self-worth.
- Make positive, informed choices as they make their way through life.
- Understand that they have a right to speak up about issues or events, and to respect other's right to do the same.
- How to get help and treatment from sources such as the School Health Service and other health and advice services including reliable information online
- Understand that sexual violence and harassment in any form is always wrong.

5. Delivery of RSE

RSE is not just learning about growing up, changes and reproduction. It is also about enabling children and young people to make and maintain healthy relationships with others, to understand about human sexuality, and to feel good about themselves and the choices they make. Information will be delivered in an accepting and honest way, which enables young people to contribute, and as deemed stage appropriate.

- 5.1. A range of teaching and learning styles are used to teach RSE supported by industry experts to ensure our delivery is appropriate and relevant to our pupils.
- 5.2. Teaching is pupil-led with an emphasis on active learning techniques such as discussion and group work.
- 5.3. Class ground rules regarding discussions are put in place to ensure a safe, supportive and positive learning environment. Examples of discussion guidelines include rules such as:
 - No derogatory language.
 - Use volume control suitable for the learning environment.
 - Promote turn taking.
 - Show respect for another's views, even when disagreeing with them.
 - Keep comments subject-specific, as opposed to personal to gain pupil voice.
- 5.4. Pupils learn research and study techniques and can engage in investigations and problem-solving activities.
- 5.5. All pupils are encouraged to take part in charity work and volunteering, as well as organising school events such as form time assemblies and open evenings /days.
- 5.6. The school will use visiting speakers, such as health workers and the police, to broaden the curriculum and share their real-life experiences, where national pandemic guidelines allow. Any such speakers are closely monitored by the class teacher who will use their professional judgement to end a speech if they consider it to contravene any of the aims of this policy or the values of our school.
- 5.7. The school consults with the local community on matters related to RSE to ensure that local issues are covered in lessons. Local Education Authority safeguarding agendas will also be delivered through this learning time.
- 5.8. Pupils' questions, unless inappropriate, are answered respectfully by teachers.

6. Safeguarding, reports of abuse and confidentiality

Every lesson reinforces that, if pupils have any sensitive/personal issues or wish to talk about any of the issues raised in the lesson; they are aware of how to raise concerns or make reports to their RSHE teacher or another member of staff about this, and how this will be handled. This also includes processes when they have concerns about a friend or peer.

- 6.1. All staff are aware of what constitutes peer-on-peer abuse. This is likely to include, but may not be limited to, the following:
 - Bullying (including cyberbullying).

- Physical abuse, e.g. hitting, kicking, hair pulling.
- Sexual violence, e.g. rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault.
- Sexual harassment, e.g. sexual comments, online sexual harassment, jokes. These may be stand-alone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- Up skirting (taking a picture under a person's clothes without their awareness, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause humiliation, distress or harm).
- Sexting
- Initiation/hazing type violence and rituals.

6.2. All staff are aware of indicators, which may signal that children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include:

- Increased absence from school, changes in friendships/relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance.
- Signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing.
- Signs of assault or unexplained injuries.
- New possessions or unexplained gifts could indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs.

6.3. All staff are aware of the associated risks surrounding pupils' involvement in serious crime, and understand measures in place to manage these.

6.4. If staff have concerns regarding a child who may be at risk of or suffering from 'honour-based' abuse (HBA) including forced marriage, they will speak to the DSL (or deputies). Where appropriate, they will activate local safeguarding procedures. As highlighted with section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015, in cases where FGM appears to have been carried out, teachers must personally report this to the police.

6.5. Staff are aware of KCSIE advice concerning what to do if a pupil informs them that they are being abused or neglected or are witnessing abuse. Staff are also aware of the appropriate levels of confidentiality. This means only involving those deemed necessary, such as the DSL (or deputy) and children's social care. Staff must never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of abuse, as this ultimately may not be in the best interests of the child.

6.6. The school will involve the DSL (or deputy) in anything related to safeguarding. They can potentially provide knowledge of trusted, high quality local resources, links to the police and other agencies, and the knowledge of local issues that may be appropriate to address in lessons.

6.7. The school invites external agencies to support the teaching of safeguarding-related subjects, they must agree in advance of the session how the external visitor will deal with safeguarding reports.

6.8. The school is aware that, when teaching new subjects, topics including self-harm and suicide may be raised by pupils. Teachers recognise the risks of encouraging or making suicide seem a more viable options for pupils, and avoid material being instructive rather than preventative.

To prevent this, teachers avoid giving instructions or methods of self-harm or suicide and the use of emotive language, videos or images.

7. Parents right to withdraw

Parents' have the right to withdraw their children from the [non-statutory/non-science] components of RSE up until 3 terms before the pupil turns 16 years old. At this point if the pupil chooses to be part of these non-statutory/non-science] then Bestwood Village School will accommodate this.

Requests for withdrawal should be put in writing and addressed to the headteacher a week before the lesson. 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 RSE.

Where a question arises that is necessary to safeguard a pupil or to address potentially harmful myths or misinformation around sex education topics, staff will provide an appropriate, factual and sensitive response which will be recorded on school safeguarding systems and follow the schools' safeguarding policy. In such cases answers will be framed to support pupil's safety, wellbeing and understanding.

8. Tailoring RSHE

- 8.1. The school uses discussions and other activities during initial RSE lessons to ascertain 'where pupils are' in terms of their knowledge and understanding of various subjects. The teaching programme will then be adjusted to reflect the composition of the class with regards to this.
- 8.2. Teaching considers the ability, age, readiness and cultural backgrounds of all young people in the class and will be tailored accordingly.
- 8.3. Adaptations are made for those for whom English is a second language to ensure that all pupils can fully access RSE educational provision.
- 8.4. All pupils with SEND receive RSE education, with content and delivery tailored to meet their individual needs.
- 8.5. **[Primary only]** The school will deliver relationships and health education as part of its timetabled RSE programme.
- 8.6. **[Secondary schools only]** The school will deliver RSE and health education as part of its timetabled PSHE programme.

9. Programme of study

The RSE programme of study will be assessed against the PSHE association SEND framework and cover the following topics:

Across all Key Stages, pupils will be supported with 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 - consent
- Self-respect and empathy for others
- Recognising and maximising a healthy lifestyle
- Managing conflict
- Discussion and group work
- What is sexual violence and harassment?
- Peer on peer abuse

What topics will be covered?

Relationship and Sex Education is delivered through discrete lessons, and certain elements are also covered within the science curriculum.

Termly themes.

Yearly overviews can be requested from the school at any time, these follow the 3 strands of living in the wider world, relationships and health and wellbeing.

10. Assessment

Assessment of PHSE+RSE is designed to meet the learning and development needs of our pupils across our learning pathways as well as ensuring that key milestones are worked towards to support pupil's safety, wellbeing and understanding.

- 10.1. Progress for our pupils on our Informal Robin Pathway will be measured against their EHCP outcomes, Engagement Model, Development Matters Framework and PHSE Association SEND Framework Outcomes dependent on their individual engagement and understanding
- 10.2. Progress for our pupils on our KS2 Sem-Formal Kestrel Pathway will be measured against their EHCP outcomes and the KS1-KS2 PHSE Association SEND Framework Outcomes
- 10.3. Progress for our pupils on our KS2 Formal Eagle Pathway will be measured against their EHCP outcomes, KS1-KS2 PHSE Association SEND Framework Outcomes and National Curriculum outcomes dependent on their individual levels of engagement and understanding.
- 10.4. Progress for our pupils on our KS3 Semi-Formal Kestrel Pathway will be measured against their EHCP outcomes, KS3-KS4 PHSE Association SEND Framework Outcomes dependent on their individual levels of engagement and understanding.
- 10.5. Progress for our pupils on our KS3 Formal Eagle Pathway will be measured against their EHCP outcomes, KS3-KS4 PHSE Association SEND Framework Outcomes and National Curriculum outcomes dependent on their individual levels of engagement and understanding.
- 10.6. The school sets the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSE as for other areas of the curriculum. A strong curriculum will build on knowledge pupils have previously acquired, including from other subjects, with regular feedback on their progress.

- 10.7. Lessons are planned to ensure pupils of differing abilities, including the most able, are suitably challenged. Teaching is assessed, identifying where pupils need extra support or intervention.
- 10.8. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is assessed through a combination of informal and formal methods that support each pupil's individual level of engagement and understanding such as 1:1 discussions, role play, responses to stimuli. Where appropriate, formative assessment methods such as tests, written assignments, discussion groups and quizzes will be used to monitor progress.
- 10.9. Progress in PHSE will be recorded and reported in our Termly Reports.

11. Monitoring and review

- 11.1. The subject as a whole will be part of the whole school Deep Dive process to ensure consistency of delivery throughout the key stages.
- 11.2. This policy will be reviewed by the Deputy Headteacher/ headteacher on an annual basis.
- 11.3. Learning scrutiny including learning walks, observations and book audits
- 11.4. Staff feedback and consultation
- 11.5. Pupil feedback and consultation