

Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education, and Health Education Policy (RSHE)

- Includes ISS Guidance April 2026

The governors of Bedford Greenacre Independent School have approved the following policy for the teaching of relationship education in the junior school and for both relationship and sex education in the secondary school, and health education throughout the school.

Year 6 pupils in the junior school will also receive introductory lessons to sex education, which lead into the topics they will be covering in their secondary years. These lessons will cover:

- Changing bodies
- Changing emotions
- Just the way you are
- Relationships
- Let's talk about sex
- Human reproduction

The governors will ensure that:

- ❖ all pupils make progress in achieving expected educational outcomes;
- ❖ subjects are well led, effectively managed and well planned;
- ❖ the quality of provision is subject to regular and effective self-evaluation;
- ❖ the teaching is delivered in a way that makes it accessible to all pupils, including those with SEND;
- ❖ clear information is provided for parents on the subject content on which their views have been sought and their right to withdraw from certain elements;
- ❖ parents' views will also be sought when reviewing this and that these subjects are resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the governors' legal obligations are fulfilled.

The School will inform parents (the term before) when relationship and sex education forms part of their child's lessons. The letter will clearly explain that at both junior and secondary level, parents do not have the right to withdraw their child from relationships education, but they may withdraw them from sex education lessons, which do not form part of the science curriculum.

The programme of relationships and sex education forms part of Bedford Greenacre Independent School's comprehensive programme of Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education and is delivered throughout the school.

Great care is exercised to ensure that the programme of study is matched to the maturity of the pupils involved. Staff will endeavour to answer pupils' questions sensitively, giving due consideration to religious and cultural factors. The programme of study will aim to develop each pupil's awareness of his/her own sexual development, to

understand changes as they take place and to see these in the context of similar developments in both the male and female of the species.

This policy is informed by:

- *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education 2026.*
- *The National Curriculum, 2021*
- *Children and Social Work Act: statutory Relationships & Sex Education, Off 2017*

DEFINITION

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is learning about the emotional, social and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, human sexuality and sexual health. Some aspects are taught in science, and others are taught as part of our Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE).

Our programme of RSE provides accurate information about the body, reproduction, sex, and sexual health. It also gives our pupils essential skills for building positive, enjoyable, respectful and non-exploitative relationships and staying safe both on and offline.

Class and subject teachers who are timetabled to teach PSHE lessons will be responsible for delivering Relationship and Sex Education lessons as applicable, with form time also used within the Junior School for these types of lesson.

MORAL AND VALUES FRAMEWORK

All members of staff contributing to Relationships and Sex Education work within an agreed clear moral framework of values:

- To promote an understanding that the ideal framework for relationships should be love, respect and tolerance.
- To promote respect for and honesty with themselves and others
- To encourage responsibility for their own actions in personal and sexual relationships.
- To encourage understanding and sensitivity towards the views and needs of others.
- This framework aims to be consistent with the School's overall aims and ethos and supports the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION

- To enable pupils to use acceptable vocabulary, without embarrassment, about sexuality and issues relating to sex and sexual relationships.
- To provide relevant information about safe sex and to encourage pupils to respect their own bodies.
- To facilitate understanding about the biological facts related to human growth and development including contraception and reproduction.
- To recognise the value of intimacy in loving and caring relationships.
- To develop a range of personal skills and qualities, such as self-esteem, self-empowerment, communication, negotiation, listening, empathy,

assertiveness, and problem solving so that our pupils have more control over the choices that will affect their lives.

- To create an atmosphere in which pupils feel confident to ask questions and discuss sexual matters.
- To challenge sexism and other prejudices such as homophobia, biphobia and transphobia in society and to promote equality of opportunity.
- To provide awareness of the sources of help and advice available within the family, school, and society and confidence/skills to make good use of them.
- To encourage respect and consideration for others.
- To encourage personal responsibility in sexual relationships and to develop skills to protect themselves from exploitation or harassment.
- To keep parents informed about relationships and sex education at school.

This framework aims to be consistent with the School's overall aims and ethos and supports the School's Equal Opportunities Policy.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION PROGRAMME

With the help of visiting speakers and specialists, the programme will address matters such as:

- Healthy relationships and consent.
- Peer Pressure
- Changes in the body at Puberty (including menstruation)
- Contraception
- Sexually transmitted infections

The responsibility for the delivery of this programme lies with staff. Parents have a right to withdraw their child from the sex education lessons that are not part of the science curriculum, but we do not expect this right to be exercised frequently. All pupils must attend the relationship lessons.

When Relationship and Sex lessons are timetabled parents will be informed (see Appendix 1: Draft Letter to Parents). If parents wish to withdraw their children from the sex education element of the lessons they should in the first instance, contact either:

- Mrs Brewer, Assistant Head, Junior School Lead
- Mrs Bartishel, RSE & PSHE Lead Senior School
- Mrs Van Der Sande Deputy Head of Juniors KS2 Co-Ordinator
- Mrs Wereszczynski KS1 Co-Ordinator

These members of staff form the PSHE Monitoring and Evaluation Group.

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND MENTAL WELLBEING

Our programme provides our pupils the information that they need to make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. It enables them to recognise what is normal and

what is an issue in themselves and others. It also signposts our pupils to appropriate sources of support should issues arise.

Through a combination of classwork and small focused group activities, we promote pupils' self-control and ability to self-regulate, and provide them with strategies for doing so. This will enable them to become confident in their ability to achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or when their goals are distant, and to respond calmly and rationally to setbacks and challenges.

We encourage open and frank discussions around health issues which encourage pupils to check their understanding and seek any necessary help and advice as they gain knowledge about how to promote good health and wellbeing.

We use a programme of study called Pol-Ed. Pol-Ed is a range of resources that have been designed to be aligned with the PSHE Association Programs of Study. The materials consist of:

- Lessons created by subject matter experts who specialise in Citizenship teaching and PSHE.
- Assemblies created by subject matter experts.
- CPD videos for professionals to support the teaching of difficult topic areas.
- Assessment tools in the guise of the Pol-Ed Passport stamps.

The PSHE Association Programs of Study is a recommended programme of study for schools to follow when creating PSHE lessons for their settings. Pol-Ed's resources are all aligned to this programme of study.

INCLUSION

Ethnic and Cultural Groups

We intend our policy to be sensitive to the needs of different ethnic groups. For some young people it is not culturally appropriate for them to be taught particular items in mixed groups. We will respond to parental requests and concerns.

Pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

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 pupils, taking specialist advice where necessary.

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.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

It is the responsibility of the PSHE Monitoring and Evaluation Group to oversee and organise the monitoring and evaluation of PSHE including the programme of Relationships and Sex Education.

CONFIDENTIALITY, CONTROVERSIAL AND SENSITIVE ISSUES

Staff cannot offer unconditional confidentiality and are required to report all safeguarding disclosures. In a case where a member of staff learns from an under 16-year-old that they are having or contemplating sexual intercourse, pastoral support will be given. Where possible, discussions with parents and carers will be facilitated. Advice from external agencies may be sought.

Child protection issues will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures outlined in our Safeguarding Children Policy. All members of staff and visitors are bound by our Data Protection, Information Sharing and Confidentiality Policy.

SCIENCE CURRICULUM

The Science Curriculum at Bedford Greenacre Independent School also includes some aspects of sex education. These are the purely biological aspects and are taught with regard to the National Curriculum and the GCSE specification. The work that will be covered includes:

- Naming the parts of the reproductive system
- Fertilisation
- Pregnancy
- Hormones in the menstrual cycle.
- The role of sex hormones in the development of secondary sexual characteristics.

Responsibility for this teaching lies with the Science Department. There is no right to withdraw your child from this work.

RELATIONSHIPS AND SEX EDUCATION CURRICULUM INC HEALTH:

Our relationships and sex education lessons cover the following topics in line with the Department for Education's guidelines referred to in the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance (2020). *The understanding and knowledge of the pupils will be assessed, both verbally and in some short written assignments throughout the course.*

Content includes:

Biological sex and gender reassignment as a protected characteristic: proper anatomical terminology inc at primary age: vaping : the online safety ac : age of criminal responsibility: Gillick competence;; personal safety (water roads, rail) at primary: misinformation and conspiracy theories as safeguarding harms.

The school avoids language that normalises harmful behaviours or stigmatises particular groups: avoids endorsing a particular view of gender identify or presenting social transition as a simple solution.

The school does its due diligence on external partners and question continued issue of providers removed from the recommended list.

The three term before 16 opt back in window is communicated to parents and pupils. Parents are well informed of the policy and all changes and have the opportunity to discuss the policy via the parents' council meetings.

FBV – Mutual respect and tolerance content cross-walks into RSE delivery.

By the end of primary school:

Families and people who care for me	Pupils should know • that families are important for children growing up because they can give love, security and stability. • the characteristics of healthy family life, commitment to each other, including in times of difficulty, protection and care for children and other family members, the importance of spending time together and sharing each other's lives. • that others' families, either in school or in the wider world, sometimes look different from their family, but that they should respect those differences and know that other children's families are also characterised by love and care. • that stable, caring relationships, which may be of different types, are at the heart of happy families, and are important for children's security as they grow up. • that marriage represents a formal and legally recognised commitment of two people to each other which is intended to be lifelong. • how to recognise if family relationships are making them feel unhappy or unsafe, and how to seek help or advice from others if needed.
Caring friendships	Pupils should know • how important friendships are in making us feel happy and secure, and how people choose and make friends. • the characteristics of friendships, including mutual respect, truthfulness, trustworthiness, loyalty, kindness, generosity, trust, sharing interests and experiences and support with problems and difficulties. • that healthy friendships are positive and welcoming towards others, and do not make others feel lonely or excluded. • that most friendships have ups and downs, and that these can often be worked through so that the friendship is repaired or even strengthened, and that resorting to violence is never right. • how to recognise who to trust and who not to trust, how to judge when a friendship is making them feel unhappy or uncomfortable, managing conflict, how to manage these situations and how to seek help or advice from others, if needed.

Respectful relationships	Pupils should know - the importance of respecting others, even when they are very different from them (for example, physically, in character, personality or backgrounds), or make different choices or have different preferences or beliefs. - practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships. - the conventions of courtesy and manners. - the importance of self-respect and how this links to their own happiness. - 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 those in positions of authority. - about different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders (primarily reporting bullying to an adult) and how to get help. - what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes can be unfair, negative or destructive. - the importance of permission-seeking and giving in relationships with friends, peers and adults.
Online relationships	Pupils should know - that people sometimes behave differently online, including by pretending to be someone they are not. - that the same principles apply to online relationships as to face-to-face relationships, including the importance of respect for others online including when we are anonymous. - the rules and principles for keeping safe online, how to recognise risks, harmful content and contact, and how to report them. - how to critically consider their online friendships and sources of information including awareness of the risks associated with people they have never met. - how information and data is shared and used online.

Being safe	Pupils should know • what sorts of boundaries are appropriate in friendships with peers and others (including in a digital context)? • about the concept of privacy and the implications of it for both children and adults; including that it is not always right to keep secrets if they relate to being safe. • that each person's body belongs to them, and the differences between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe physical, and other, contact. • how to respond safely and appropriately to adults they may encounter (in all contexts, including online) whom they do not know. • how to recognise and report feelings of being unsafe or feeling bad about any adult. • how to ask for advice or help for themselves or others, and to keep trying until they are heard. • how to report concerns or abuse, and the vocabulary and confidence needed to do so. • where to get advice e.g. family, school and/or other sources.
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By the end of secondary school:

Schools should continue to develop knowledge on topics specified for primary as required and in addition cover the following content by the end of 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 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. • 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); and, how to seek help or advice, including reporting concerns about others, if needed.
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Respectful relationships, including friendships	Pupils should know - 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. 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 (e.g. 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.
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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 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. • 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, e.g. physical, emotional, mental, sexual and reproduction 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 pressuring 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/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.
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APPENDIX 1: Draft letter to parents

Dear parent/guardian

Relationships and Sex Education

As part of the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education programme your child is coveringthis term.

Nowadays, there is a vast amount of, sometimes confusing, information about relationships and sex on the internet, on TV, in magazines, etc. which young people may have access to, and this can sometimes make an already confusing time seem even more complicated!

If young people can make their transition into adulthood with good information and the confidence and knowledge to understand what is happening to them, they will hopefully grow into confident and healthy adults able to make positive choices. The session in school may reinforce what you are already doing at home.

The lessons coverincluding:

All pupils must take part in the relationship lessons, but you have the right to withdraw your child from the sex education lessons which do not form part of the normal science curriculum (please refer to our Relationship Education, Sex Education and Health Education policy for further information).

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mrs Brewer or Mrs Bartishel using their contact emails found on the school website.

Kind regards,