



TAUNTON
— SCHOOL —

Relationships and Sex Education Policy (SNR 007)

Policy Lead	Deputy Head Pastoral & DSL
Committee	
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Statement of intent

Taunton School takes its responsibility to provide high quality, evidence and age-appropriate teaching of Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) to all its pupils, as part of the school's PSHEE Programme (Personal, Social, Health, Economic Education) very seriously. The teaching of RSE can help to prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. It allows us to promote the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and in the wider society. This policy outlines how the school's RSE curriculum is organised and delivered, to ensure it meets the needs of all pupils.

1. Legal framework and statutory requirements

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

- Equality Act 2010
- DfE Guidance 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' 2019
- Children and Social Work Act 2017
- DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'
- DfE (2021) 'Teaching about relationships, sex and health'
- DfE (2019) 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education'
- DfE Guidance 'Teaching Online Safety in Schools' 2019
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with children and young people 2020

The Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education (England) Regulations 2019, made under sections 34 and 35 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, make Relationships Education compulsory for all pupils receiving primary education and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) compulsory for all pupils receiving secondary education.

[Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-and-health-education-guidance)
([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk))

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in achieving the expected educational outcomes.
- Ensuring the RSE curriculum is well-led, effectively managed and well-planned.
- Evaluating the quality of provision through regular and effective self-evaluation.
- Ensuring that teaching is delivered in ways that are accessible to all pupils including EAL and those with SEND.
- Providing clear information to parents on the subject content and the right to request that their child is withdrawn.
- Ensuring RSE is resourced, staffed and timetabled in a way that ensures the school can fulfil its legal obligations.
- Ensuring the policy is published on the school's website and provided to anyone who requests it.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring all staff are suitably trained to deliver the subjects.
- Ensuring parents are fully informed of this policy.

- Reviewing all requests to withdraw pupils from non-statutory elements of the RSE curriculum.
- Discussing withdrawal requests with parents, and the pupil if appropriate, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum, including the benefits of receiving the education.
- Ensuring withdrawn pupils receive appropriate, purposeful education during the period of withdrawal.
- Reviewing this policy on an annual basis.
- Reporting to the governing board on the effectiveness of this policy and the curriculum.

The Head of PSHEE is also the RSE subject lead and will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the delivery of RSE.
- Working closely with colleagues in related curriculum areas to ensure the RSE curriculum compliments, and does not duplicate, the content covered in other curriculum subjects.
- Ensuring the curriculum is age-appropriate and of high quality.
- Reviewing changes to the RSE curriculum and advising on their implementation.
- Monitoring the learning and teaching of RSE, providing support to staff where necessary and helping to develop colleagues' expertise in RSE.
- Ensuring the continuity and progression between each year group.
- Ensuring teachers are provided with adequate resources to support teaching of the curriculum.
- Ensuring the school meets its statutory requirements in relation to RSE.
- Leading staff meetings.
- Organising, providing and monitoring CPD opportunities in the subject.
- Ensuring the correct standards are met for recording and assessing pupil performance.
- Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of RSE and providing reports to the head.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Offering advice and consultation for safeguarding-related subjects in the RSE curriculum.
- Being an appropriate point of contact for staff who have concerns about the welfare of a pupil that have arisen through the teaching of RSE.

Subject teachers will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with, and promoting, this policy.
- Delivering RSE in a manner that is sensitive, of high quality and appropriate for each year group.
- Ensuring they do not express personal views or beliefs when delivering the curriculum.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of appropriate teaching methods and resources are used to cover the content.
- Modelling positive attitudes to RSE.
- Liaising with the SENCO to identify and respond to individual needs of pupils with SEND. Liaising with the RSE subject lead on key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.

- Monitoring pupil progress in RSE.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of RSE to the RSE subject lead.
- Reporting any safeguarding concerns or disclosures that pupils may make as a result of the subject content to the DSL.
- Responding appropriately to pupils whose parents have requested to withdraw them from the non-statutory components of RSE, by providing them with alternative education opportunities.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Advising teaching staff how best to identify and support pupils' individual needs.
- Advising staff on the use of TAs in order to meet pupils' individual needs.

3. Delivery of RSE and teaching methodology

RSE is not an isolated subject and as such, it permeates the whole curriculum and the pastoral system. All teachers in the school, regardless of whether they teach PSHEE, are responsible for modelling positive attitudes towards RSE and responding to the needs of pupils. RSE is taught as a structured lesson within the timetable. In PSHEE lessons. Biological aspects of RSE will also be taught as part of the science curriculum and elements of the RSE curriculum can be found in almost every area of the curriculum. In addition, planned RSE discussions within tutor time, drop down days, chapel services and inspirational speakers, complement the whole school approach to teaching RSE.

Lyndsay White is in the subject lead for RSE and the Head of the PSHEE programme. All staff are responsible for the whole school approach to delivering RSE and as such, there is an annual inset refresher. In addition, a team of six teachers teach the RSE delivered within PSHEE lessons and there is supplementary training provided to meet the needs of the individuals teaching RSE. Taunton School has membership of LifeLessons, a platform which provides resources to support the teaching of RSE in PSHEE lessons and also through a whole school approach. In addition, the PSHE Association informs the RSE programme and a range of resources including the NSPCC, Brook and the book, Great Relationships and Sex Education (Hoyle & McGeeney, 2020) are used to ensure content is age appropriate. The RSE programme is reviewed annually by the Deputy Head Pastoral and the Head of Student Voice (a senior student elected to the role) and whilst it must cover the statutory requirements, staff, pupils and parents are consulted and encouraged to provide feedback to ensure the programme meets the needs of pupils, in an engaging and effective manner.

The programme will be taught through a range of teaching methods, including teacher-led presentations, external speakers, debates, role-plays, group tasks, individual exercises and research/discussion. We will ensure learning 'starts from where students are' by assessing students' prior knowledge either formally (using MS Forms or Kahoot) or informally (using websites like Quizlet and verbal questioning) when introducing a new topic or idea. We shall seek to understand students' prior knowledge by encouraging them to share what they know.

When using external agencies and speakers to deliver aspects of our RSE curriculum, we will:

- Ensure we have checked the visitor credentials and references from other schools.
- Discuss with the visitor the details of how they intend to deliver their sessions and ensure the content is age-appropriate and accessible for all pupils.
- Ensure the teaching delivered by the external experts fits with the planned curriculum and provisions of this policy.
- Agree with the agency on how confidentiality will work in any lesson and that the visitor understands how safeguarding reports must be dealt with in line with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Whilst at the school, we will ensure that external visitors are always supervised and following the session, it will be reviewed by staff and students.

4. TS RSE Ground Rules and learning environment

The Ground Rules are explained at the beginning of the year and are available in students' OneNote for reference. They will be referred to throughout lessons.

1. Respect privacy. We can discuss examples but do not use names or descriptions that identify anyone, including ourselves.
2. Listen to others. It is okay to disagree with each other, but we should listen properly before making assumptions or deciding how to respond. When disagreeing, challenge the statement not the person.
3. No judgement. We can explore beliefs and misunderstandings about a topic without fear of being judged.

4. Choose level of participation. Everyone has the right to choose not to answer a question or join discussion. We never put anyone 'on the spot' (no personal questions or pressure to answer).

A safe and supportive learning environment will be created through the following means:

- Use of 'ground rules' with the students in each classroom where appropriate
- Use of 'distancing' techniques by the teacher, especially when introducing new themes or concepts e.g., use of role-play to create a safe environment to depersonalise a student's learning and create emotional space
- Ensuring teachers' confidence and knowledge are adequate to answer students' questions
- Availability of an anonymous questionnaires to help indicate where safeguarding/pastoral issues may exist which need follow-up.

We will ensure that sessions, including those on risky behaviours, remain positive in tone by maintaining a balance regarding lesson content and promoting positive behaviours and choices whenever relevant. We shall use consistent ground rules to create a safe and supportive learning environment. We will ensure that where students indicate that they may be vulnerable and at risk, they will get appropriate support by liaising with house staff and staff in the schools' Health Centre and trigger warnings are provided when sensitive content is being taught. If a pupil makes a disclosure, we will follow the schools' Safeguarding Policy and consult with our DSLs.

'It is recognised that there will be a range of opinions regarding RSE. The starting principle when teaching each of these must be that the applicable law should be taught in a factual way so that pupils are clear on their rights and responsibilities as citizens'. (DfE, 2019).

5. Purpose and structure of RSE Curriculum

RSE is learning about emotional, social, cultural and physical aspects of growing up, relationships, sex, sexuality, sexual health, diversity and personal identity. The teaching of RSE is one of the most important ways we act on our responsibility to safeguard and protect our pupils.

‘Effective RSE does not encourage early sexual experimentation. It should teach young people to understand human sexuality and to respect themselves and others. It enables young people to mature, build their confidence and self-esteem and understand the reasons for delaying sexual activity. Effective RSE also supports people, throughout life, to develop safe, fulfilling and healthy sexual relationships, at the appropriate time’. (DfE, 2019).

The aim of RSE is to give young people the information they need to help them:

- Develop healthy, nurturing relationships of all kinds, not just intimate relationships.
- Know what a healthy relationship looks like and what makes a good friend, a good colleague and a successful marriage or other type of committed relationship.
- Understanding how healthy relationships develop into intimate relationships and resisting pressure to have sex (and not applying pressure).
- Know acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in relationships.
- Understand the positive effects that good relationships have on their mental wellbeing.
- Identify when relationships are not right and understand how such situations can be managed.
- Understand contraceptive options.
- Know the law relating to sex which should be taught include the age of consent, what consent is and is not, the definitions and recognition of rape, sexual assault and harassment, and choices permitted by the law around pregnancy.
- Keep themselves and others safe, including online.

6. RSE subject overview

RSE will continue to develop pupils’ knowledge on the topics taught at a primary level. The DfE states that by the end of secondary school, pupils should know:

Families

- 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.
- About the characteristics and legal status of other types of long-term relationships.

- About the roles and responsibilities of parents with respect to raising 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 recognise this in others' relationships); and to seek help or advice if needed, including reporting concerns about others.

Respectful relationships, including friendships

- 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 relationships.
- Practical steps they can take in a range of different contexts to improve or support respectful relationships.
- How stereotypes, particularly those based on sex, gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or disability, can cause damage, e.g. how they might normalise non-consensual behaviour.
- That in school and 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.
- Different types of bullying (including cyberbullying), the impact of bullying, responsibilities of bystanders to report bullying and how and where to seek help.
- That some types of behaviour in relationships that can be criminal, including violent behaviour and coercive control.
- What constitutes sexual harassment and violence and why these are always unacceptable.
- About the legal rights and responsibilities regarding equality, with reference to the protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010, and that everyone is unique and equal.

Online and media

- Their rights, responsibilities and opportunities online, and that the same expectations of behaviour apply in all contexts.
- About online risks, including that material shared with another person 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 they receive.
- 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 is a criminal offence which carries severe penalties, including jail.
- How information and data is generated, collected, shared and used online.

Being safe

- About 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
- How people can actively communicate and recognise consent from others, including sexual consent, and how and when consent can be withdrawn – this includes online.

Intimate and sexual relationships, including sexual health

- 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 and negatively, e.g. 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 both men and women.
- The 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 enjoy intimacy without sex.
- The facts about the full range of contraceptive choices, their effectiveness and options available.
- The facts around pregnancy including miscarriage.
- That there are choices in relation to pregnancy, with legally and medically 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) are transmitted, how risk can be reduced through safer sex and the importance of 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.

7. Role of parents

The school understands that parents' role in the development of their children's understanding about relationships and sex is vital and will, therefore, engage parents as far as possible in their children's learning. This will include providing parents with opportunities to understand and ask questions about the school's approach to RSHE.

The school will consult with parents when reviewing the content of the school's RSE curriculum, and will be given opportunities to voice their opinions and concerns. The school

will use the views of parents to inform decisions made about the curriculum content and delivery; however, parents will not be granted a 'veto' on curriculum content, and all final decisions will be the school's to make.

When in consultation with parents, the school will provide:

- The curriculum content, including what will be taught and when.
- Examples of the resources the school intends to use to deliver the curriculum.
- Information about parents' right to withdraw their child from non-statutory elements of RSE.

The school will remain aware that the teaching of some aspects of the curriculum may be of concern to parents. If parents have concerns regarding RSE, they can submit these to Lyndsay.white@tauntonschool.co.uk to arrange a meeting.

8. Right to withdraw from RSE lessons

The school aims to keep parents informed about all aspects of the RSE curriculum through communication at the beginning of each academic year and engaging with parents about the content of our curriculum is an important part of providing a high-quality programme.

It is a statutory right of parents to request that their child be withdrawn from some or all of sex education delivered as part of statutory RSE. This does not include withdrawal from relationships education and the elements on human growth and reproduction which fall under the National Curriculum science. Any parent wishing to withdraw their child from all or part of sex education should put their request in writing to the Deputy Head Pastoral (Lyndsay.white@tauntonschool.co.uk). A meeting will then be arranged to discuss the request. Before granting a withdrawal request, the headteacher will discuss the request with the parents and, as appropriate, the pupil, to ensure their wishes are understood and to clarify the nature and purpose of the curriculum. RSE is a vital part of the school curriculum and supports child development and we strongly urge parents to carefully consider their decision before requesting to withdraw their child from this aspect of the school curriculum. If a pupil is excused from sex education by their parents, but the child wishes to receive sex education, the school will make arrangements to deliver sex education to the child in the three terms before the child turns 16.

The school defines the RSE curriculum into the following categories:

Relationships and Health Education (no right to withdraw)	Sex Education (right to request withdrawal)
The characteristics of positive and healthy friendships, how to develop respectful friendships	Different types of sex
Consent and sexual boundaries and sexual violence including rape	Sexual contact, including masturbation
Sexual orientation and gender identity	
Relationship values, families and parenting	
Healthy relationships including marriage	
Unhealthy relationships including forced marriage, domestic violence and coercive control	
The influence of pornography	
Different types of relationships, how to manage difficult relationships and ending friendships	
Puberty and how bodies change, the menstrual cycle and how to deal with difficult emotions	
Female Genital Mutilation	
Different methods of contraception and sexually transmitted infections	
Abortion	
Fertility challenges	

9. Equality and accessibility

The school will comply with the relevant requirements of the Equality Act 2010 and will ensure the curriculum does not discriminate against pupils because of their:

- Age
- Sex
- Race
- Disability
- Religion or belief

- Gender reassignment
- Pregnancy or maternity
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Sexual orientation

The school will consider the backgrounds, gender, age range and needs of its pupils and determine whether it is necessary to put in place additional support for pupils with the above protected characteristics.

The school will design the RSE curriculum to be inclusive of all pupils. The school will be aware that some pupils are more vulnerable to exploitation, bullying and other issues due to their characteristics, e.g. SEND or being LGBTQ+. Teachers will understand that they may need to liaise with the SENCO and be more explicit and adapt their planning or work to appropriately deliver the curriculum to pupils with SEND.

Where there is a need to tailor content and teaching to meet the needs of pupils at different developmental stages, the school will ensure the teaching remains sensitive, age-appropriate, developmentally appropriate and is delivered with reference to the law.

The school will take steps to foster healthy and respectful peer-to-peer communication and behaviour between all pupils, and provide an environment which challenges perceived limits on pupils based on their gender or any other characteristic.

The school will be actively aware of everyday issues such as sexism, misogyny, homophobia and gender stereotypes and take positive action to build a culture within which these are not tolerated. Any occurrences of such issues will be identified and managed promptly. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are not acceptable and will not be tolerated. Any reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment will be handled in accordance with the school's Child-on-child Abuse Policy.

10. Safeguarding and confidentiality

All pupils will be taught about keeping themselves safe, including online, as part of a broad and balanced curriculum. To meet DfE's best practice advice, the DSL will be involved in the formulation of safeguarding-related areas of the curriculum, as the knowledge and resources may help to address safeguarding issues more appropriately and effectively.

When teaching issues that are particularly sensitive for pupils of all ages, e.g. self-harm or suicide, teachers will be made aware of the risks of inadvertently encouraging, or providing instructions to, pupils. PSHEE teachers will be made aware of safeguarding information specific to students which could result in a topic triggering an emotional response.

Confidentiality within the classroom will be an important component of RSE, and teachers will be expected to respect the confidentiality of their pupils as far as is possible, in compliance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding policy. Teachers will, however, understand that some aspects of RSE may lead to a pupil raising a safeguarding concern, e.g. disclosing that they are being abused, and that if a disclosure is

made, the DSL will be alerted immediately. Pupils will be made aware of how to raise their concerns or make a report, and how their report will be handled – this includes the process for when they have a concern about a peer.

11. Monitoring and assessment

The school will have the same high expectations of the quality of pupils' work in RSHE as for other curriculum areas. Lessons will be planned to provide suitable challenge to pupils of all abilities.

Opportunities for assessment are provided through teacher, peer and self-assessment.

Baseline assessment, in order to understand students' prior learning, takes place to ensure new learning is relevant and progress can be assessed. Students will be provided with opportunities to reflect on and assess their learning, recognise its relevance to their day to day lives and assess how they are progressing and their input will be used to help inform the curriculum covered.

Pupils will use OneNote as an online folder for work completed in RSE and teachers will use this platform as one of the ways to monitor and assess understanding. Where assessment highlights a lack of understanding at the end of a topic, this will be addressed either through additional sessions or within the PSHEE lesson. Particular care is given to ensure pupils with a SEND profile show progress with their understanding and Kate Walters (SENcO) reviews the tracking data on a termly basis. PSHEE teachers will report on progress through the school reporting system but there will be no formal examination.

12. RSE Programmes of study for Year 9 - 13:

RSE is taught through a spiral programme, revisiting topics, whilst increasing the challenge and broadening the scope and pupil understanding. The RSE programme may be adapted throughout the year, based upon current events, world issues and targeted student need but will cover statutory content by the end of each key stage. Below is an indication of when RSE topics will be taught within the structured PSHEE lessons:

Year 9

Term	Topic
Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of healthy and positive relationships (non-intimate) • Peer pressure • Discrimination, prejudice and allyship • Online safety & grooming
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultivating positive relationships with your body • Puberty & body image • Menstrual wellbeing
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing sexuality & readiness for sex • Consent • Sexual health, incl. STIs & contraception • Sexual violence and harassment incl. sending of nudes

Year 10

Term	Topic
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Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online wellbeing incl. sending of nudes • Online influence, radicalisation and extremism
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family relationships and value conflicts • Abusive intimate relationships • Making decisions about sex • Recognising and withdrawing consent • Pregnancy • Body image in the media & pornography
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender norms, stereotypes and identities • Identity and mental health

Year 11

Term	Topic
Autumn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child sexual and criminal exploitation • Sexual violence • Honour Based Violence, Forced Marriage and Female Genital Mutilation • Marriage and other types of long term relationships • Parenthood & fertility • Delaying sex / developing readiness for sex and consent
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive coping strategies during examinations • Sexual health & STIs • Use of alcohol and drugs and impact on relationships • Impact of viewing sexually explicit material

Y12 & 13

- Identifying healthy and toxic behaviours in relationships and what to do
- Impact of pornography, Nudes and Semi-nudes
- Consent and assertive communication
- Sexually transmitted infections, contraception and safe sex
- Fertility, pregnancy, miscarriage & abortion
- Personal safety